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TURN TO PAGE FOUR OF TRAVEL token collect

THE INDEPENDENT

ON SUNDAY

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He's 64, she's 42: why don't they look it?

REVIEW



Can Lady Jay really make life better for women?

4-PAGE NEWS SPECIAL



How REM's Michael Stipe befriended a Maniac

REVIEW



Vivienne Westwood explains herself

REAL LIFE

Cloned cells would be stored to grow blood, bones, and muscles for future transplants

Doctors plan 'genetic twin' for every child

SCIENTISTS HAVE devised a way of providing every child with its own 'body repair kit' by using cloning as a way of generating unlimited supplies of human tissue for transplant surgery.

They believe their plans to create the world's first human clones could revolutionise the treatment of incurable diseases.

Researchers from Britain, who are working with American scientists, have informed Government advisers of their plans, which envisage the day when every new-born baby will have its own supply of cloned cells frozen in a national tissue bank for transplant operations in later life.

The team, which includes the scientists who cloned Dolly the sheep, is working on combining these techniques with research on embryonic cells which can develop into blood, bone, muscle and even brain cells. This would enable perfect tissue matches without

Great cell breakout, Focus, page 19

the risk of rejection which occurs with conventional transplants.

They emphasise that their submission stops short of creating a cloned embryo which develops much beyond a week old, thereby circumventing ethical concerns about the creation of a cloned adult.

The proposals are nevertheless likely to generate a wave of disapproval from groups that are concerned about the rights of unborn children and other ethicists who believe that no form of human cloning should ever be allowed.

The Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, where Dolly was created from the cell of an adult sheep, confirmed this weekend that it is in active negotiations with scientists who have pioneered the use of embryonic cells for transplant operations.

"We are in confidential discussions with prospective partners but are not yet ready to make a public announcement," said Harry Griffin, the Roslin Institute's assistant director of science.

It is understood, however, that one of the potential partners is the team from the University of Wisconsin-Madison which last week announced that it had identified the embryonic 'stem cells' capable of developing into any one of the dozens of different tissues of the body.

The advantage of combining the Dolly cloning technology with the stem cell research

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

is that unlimited supplies of tissue could be generated from the transplant patient who would not need to take drugs to prevent organ rejection.

Ian Wilmut, who led the Dolly research at the Roslin, is also collaborating with Austin Smith, director of the Centre for Genome Research at Edinburgh University, who is the leading exponent of Britain's research effort into human embryonic stem cells.

Dr Smith said that he has submitted an outline of the collaborative proposals to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), Britain's statutory watchdog on embryo research which is in consultation on the future of human cloning.

"It's an area that the Roslin Institute is very enthusiastic about and we'd like to work together on this. We can't do it at the moment because in the UK it is illegal, but this research may help to persuade people of the potential benefits," Dr Smith said.

Generating embryonic clones by fusing the cell nucleus of a person with an unfertilised human egg which has had its own nucleus removed promises to allow scientists to extract embryonic stem cells that will be a perfect tissue match of the person in question, Dr Austin said.

"You'll be able to take tissue samples from babies when they are born and derive stem cells by nuclear transfer in order to freeze them down so that everybody will have their own embryonic stem cells," he said.

"That's not what we can do today, but at the research level that's what we're thinking. I think it would be possible in a couple of years."

In his submission to the HFEA, Dr Smith calls for an extension of the regulations covering human embryo research so that "therapeutic cloning" is permitted. He still voices his opposition to "reproductive cloning" which would result in the a fully mature adult clone.

"For isolation of embryonic stem cells, embryos are only required to develop to the blastocyst stage, which falls well within the 14-day limit of current legislation," he says in the submission.

A spokesman for the HFEA said that the suggestions of Dr Smith and the Roslin scientists are being "actively considered" by the authority.

"It's on the agenda. We haven't received an application but clearly the concept has been made to us. We're discussing it in a general context," said the spokesman.



Scientists hope every new-born baby will have its own supply of frozen cells

NICOLA KURTZ

Essex police face horse cruelty claim

BY MARIE WOOLF

ESSEX POLICE, rocked last week by the conviction of three officers for brutality to police dogs, is facing a further inquiry involving cruelty to horses.

The head of Essex's mounted police section has been suspended following allegations that he deliberately hurt a police horse that he rode on duty.

Sgt Paul Hemmings, who was based with the force's mounted unit at Southend, is being investigated by the same disciplinary section that looked into the killing of Acer, the police dog who died in November last year after being hung over a fence and kicked.

Sgt Hemmings was reported by a fellow mounted officer for alleged cruelty to a working horse, a heavyweight hunter cross standing at more than 16 hands. It was treated by a vet but is now back on duty.

The police are preparing a file for the Crown Prosecution Service, which will consider whether to bring criminal proceedings. Convictions under the Protection of Animals Act can lead to prison sentences or heavy fines.

"An officer based in South Essex is the subject of an investigation. He was suspended on 12 May this year," said a spokeswoman for Essex Police. "Our discipline department is conducting an investigation into a mounted police officer who has been suspended on

allegations of cruelty. A file is being prepared for the Crown Prosecution Service. Any disciplinary proceedings will follow court proceedings. The allegations involve treatment of horses, theft and sexual harassment."

The RSPCA is monitoring the case. But a spokeswoman said the Society was confident that Essex Police would take tough action if the allegations proved to be true.

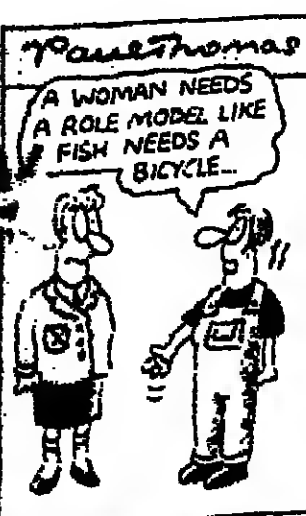
"The RSPCA are aware of this," she said. "We are always concerned about suggestions that working animals have been mistreated. It's a very serious matter. But we were quite impressed by the investigation over Acer and we hope that this will be as thorough."

Last week three Essex Police officers were convicted of running a "brutal" training programme for police dogs. They were found guilty of instructing handlers to kick the animals during training and of hanging the dogs by their collars over fences. The police switchboard in Essex has been inundated with dozens of calls from outraged members of the public.

The inquiry into alleged horse cruelty raises wider questions about whether the force's monitoring of its animal sections are adequate.



Teen girls urged to admire Role Model Spice



A PANEL of "role models" for teenage girls, including celebrities such as the former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell, the heptathlete Denise Lewis, and the popstarlet Billie, is to be set up by the Government as part of its drive to promote the role of women in society.

Baroness Jay, Minister for Women, will tomorrow announce that teenage girls have been identified as a priority area, amid concerns that they are more likely to "drop out" than boys are.

Ministers will set up an advisory group of female high-flyers to act as role models to teenage girls, Ms Halliwell,

BY RACHEL SYLVESTER
Political Editor

recently appointed a United Nations ambassador and an advocate of "girl power", has expressed interest in joining.

Other celebrities likely to be approached include the actress Emma Thompson and the therapist Sue Orbach. They will work with less well known successful women in arguing that teenage girls should have higher aspirations.

"Role models are very important in the development of teenage girls," Lady Jay said. "We are trying to create a group of people we can use to

be that." Ministers also plan to send girls on "awaydays" where they will be able to discuss issues such as sex and drugs with professional counsellors away from the classroom.

Teachers will be asked to identify school-leavers who have successfully made the transition to work who can attend as well. Members of the "role model panel" could be invited. "It's no good having a teacher who teaches geography in the morning and contraception in the afternoon," Lady Jay said. "We want to take it out of that context."

The Government has been prompted to act by research showing that girls out-perform boys during their early school years, then fall behind. Ministers are worried about increasing drug and alcohol abuse among girls, and the rising number of "girl gangs".

The drive to tackle problems among girls is part of a wider initiative to help women. The women's unit, set up by Harriet Harman last year and being relaunched tomorrow, has been moved to the Cabinet Office.

Lady Jay wants to replace old style feminism with an attempt to tackle bread-and-butter issues that concern women, such as income, health and education. She would not describe her-

self as a feminist, she said. "In politics, feminism is seen as negative, complaining about things; it's perceived to be about separatism, putting up a brick wall between men and women. I don't think you have to be negative like that."

Ministers and officials will be sent a document this week that tells them to vet all proposals for their implications for women, members of ethnic minorities and disabled people. It is signed by Lady Jay, Jack Straw, Home Secretary, and David Blunkett, Education and Employment Secretary.

Four Page Focus special: Pages 20-23

ON OTHER PAGES

Alarm over child abuse
The author of the biggest ever Home Office study of child abuse warns that a new generation of predatory paedophiles will emerge unless urgent preventive action is taken. PAGE 5

After the flood
In the devastated Honduran capital, survivors of Hurricane Mitch recalled the torments that came at them "like a thousand trains", and struggled with the stench of death and threat of epidemics. PAGE 13

US turmoil as Gingrich quits
Republican losses in the US mid-term elections not only prompted the speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, to resign, but also sparked a civil war within the party. PAGE 16

Villa vindicated
Dion Dublin celebrated his £5.75m move from Coventry City to the Premiership leaders, Aston Villa, by scoring twice in their 3-2 win over Tottenham Hotspur at Villa Park. SPORT, SECTION 2



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IN TODAY'S PAPER



Why a 79-year-old man is campaigning to be convicted of stealing Sophia Loren's jewels.

REVIEW p24



Would you spend £7 a day to send your child to school with this lunch? NEWS p6



"One half expected to see Robbie Coltrane hove into view in a badly fitting periwig pretending to be Dr Johnson." DJ Taylor asks why the Vanity Fair producers ignored his advice. CULTURE p1



"I'd like to see our nine-year-old decently shaken up - because that's a way of believing in movies." CULTURE p5



"I know when I w quit." Glen Hoddle on the press of managing England. SPORT p8

Peers put PR plan in disarray

THE GOVERNMENT has been forced into a humiliating climb-down over a new proportional representation voting system for elections to the European Parliament. It is to announce a review of the proposed "closed list" system, by which electors can vote for a party but not individual candidates in the regional constituencies.

The move is designed to drive a Bill implementing the new voting system through the House of Lords by the end of the Parliamentary session this month. Tory hereditary peers, angered by Labour plans to abolish their voting and speaking rights, have been turning out in droves to vote against the Government's plans.

The Opposition is trying to hold up the Bill in the Lords so that it falls by the end of the 1997-1998 Parliament, which ends this month. This would cause havoc for next year's European Parliamentary elections and would mean that all political parties would have to begin their candidate selection proceedings again.

Jack Straw has decided that in an attempt to get the Bill through he will announce his intention to "review" the closed list system after the European elections next year. The move could lead to the scrapping of the closed list system, which has been criticised as a ruse for getting loyal Blairites into office.

BY MARIE WOOLF
Political Correspondent

The Home Secretary's office was in frantic talks with Labour MEPs about the Bill last week. "We are not changing the Bill. It will still be closed lists," said a source close to the Home Secretary. "After the European elections we will hear from parties to see what they think."

The move is to be supported by the Liberal Democrats, who have accused the Tories of political opportunism because they did not make an issue of closed lists when the Bill was at committee stage. The Liberal Democrats would prefer open lists, which allow voters to place a mark next to an individual candidate, but are voting for the Government.

"It's a nonsense for hereditary peers to be blocking a measure about how we conduct our democracy," said a spokesman for the Liberal Democrats.

Around 22 Labour MEPs, many of them old Labour activists, are expected to lose their seats under the closed list system which enables Millbank to vet candidates giving disloyal politicians unwinnable spots on the list. Ken Coates, a Labour MEP, said, "The hereditary peers want to spike the Government's guns because they are about to be led off to the abattoir themselves. It serves New Labour right. They are altogether too bossy."



He's only here because of the beer: Stanley Clayton, 104, was the eldest of 13 veterans of the First World War who were presented with the Legion d'Honneur yesterday by the French Ambassador. Mr Clayton - who thrives on free beer, awarded to him for his local pub in Sheffield on his 100th birthday - served in France with the Royal Engineers. He appears in tonight's documentary 'Veterans: The Last Survivors of the Great War', 10pm, BBC1

Blair knew Davies details

BY RACHEL SYLVESTER
Political Editor

TONY BLAIR was given full details of the police file on Ron Davies the day the former Welsh Secretary resigned after an incident on Clapham Common.

Downing Street has now confirmed that the Prime Minister was told last Tuesday about all the evidence that had been gathered by Brixton police during interviews with the MP and other inquiries.

It is understood that Sir Richard Wilson, the Cabinet Secretary, informed Mr Blair of the conflicting stories given by Mr Davies, and the suspicions that gay sex had been involved and that the robbers tried to blackmail the minister. Sir Richard was instructed to find

out what had been going on. The admission throws further question marks over Downing Street's insistence that neither sex nor drugs had been involved and that it had disclosed all the "salient facts" in its possession. It has already emerged that Scotland Yard's

Deputy Commissioner, John Stevens, spoke to Downing Street on Tuesday, before Mr Blair's meeting with Mr Davies.

However, a spokesman stressed that police suspicions would not count as "facts" in Downing Street's view. The Prime Minister "was shown the crime report and he said that it did not add any salient facts to the account Ron had given".

Disaster alert for 2000 bug

BY MARIE WOOLF
Political Correspondent

A SECRET Cabinet disaster unit, only activated in times of dire civil emergencies such as nuclear leaks, hostage situations or foreign invasion, is to be mobilised on 31 December 1999 to cope with the fall-out from the millennium bug.

The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, also will be put on alert to co-ordinate a strategy to cope with chaos on Britain's roads, airports and hospitals.

The Government fears that the ordinary emergency services will be unable to deal with the mayhem caused by the possible national shutdown of lifts, air traffic control systems and hospital equipment.

It plans to put the Civil Contingency Unit, run by a secretive cabinet group known as Cobra, on alert to deal with the situation. The unit, which has the power to assemble the heads of the Army, Navy, Royal Air Force, security services and

SAS - for emergency strategy meetings - was last mobilised in 1994 during a training exercise to prepare for a possible nuclear attack by terrorists.

Government sources confirmed that the unit has been put on alert for New Year's Eve. "We are doing very well with our preparations to deal with the bug in Government departments. Plans are ahead of schedule with hospitals," a senior government aide said.

The millennium bug could cause a shutdown of many of Britain's computer-operated systems because the chips are not programmed to recognise the year 2000. Analysis fear the bug will lead to chaos on the roads and create a free-for-all for looters which will be compounded by massive millennium celebrations that day.

Award for IoS's Geoffrey Lean

GEOFFREY LEAN (left) Environment Correspondent of the Independent on Sunday, has been given a prestigious international award to recognise his outstanding contribution to environmental journalism.

Last week, he was presented with the first Foundation prize for lifetime achievement, to mark the start of the Reuters-IUCN Media Awards designed "to promote excellence in environmental reporting worldwide".

Queen Noor of Jordan, who presented the award during a ceremony at Fontainebleau Castle, France, praised Mr Lean's "long-standing contribution to the highest standards of environ-

mental reporting". President Chirac of France, the Presidents of Switzerland, Mali and Burkina Faso, and environment ministers from several nations were also at the ceremony.

The new awards scheme - a joint venture by Reuters and the IUCN (World Conservation Union), the world's leading international scientific body on the environment - is the first global programme of its kind. Unusually, it will focus on "the coverage of environmental issues in the context of mainstream social, political, and economic affairs".

Geoffrey Lean has won many national and international awards for his work. The IoS is the current Environment Newspaper of the Year in the British Environment and Media Awards.

BRIEFLY

HOME

BBC bans radio guest over Mandelson
The editor of Peter Mandelson's local newspaper was banned from appearing on a BBC radio show following the controversial memo forbidding guests to mention the Secretary of Trade and Industry's private life. A scheduled appearance on Radio 5 Live by Peter Barron, editor of the *Hartlepool Mail*, was cancelled three hours before he was due to go on air.

Russell case witnesses 'threatened'

Kent police are investigating claims that two witnesses whose evidence helped to convict Michael Stone of murdering Lin Megan Russell have been threatened and told to withdraw their testimonies.

New crackdown on arms dealers

Arms dealers face prosecution if weapons they sell go to embargoed countries, under law being drawn up in Whitehall. Ministers plan to make it illegal to broker deals on weapons which end up in banned nations as well as to export them.

Canova sculpture to go to Ireland

An 18th-century marble statue of Cupid by Antonio Canova, which was found covered in paint and moss in a West Country garden three years ago after being missing for nearly a century, is to be returned to Ireland. The National Gallery in Dublin will put the work in a permanent display.

Murdered girl's last walk re-enacted

A policewoman has taken part in a reconstruction of the walk home from a disco by Jenny King before the 22-year-old receptionist was murdered. Reward money now totals £36,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Ms King's killer.

Doctor suspended after indecency claim

A hospital doctor has been suspended after a complaint of indecent assault from a female patient. Anaesthetist Dr Din Tanti was suspended immediately by Ashington Hospital, Northumberland following the allegation. The doctor denies the accusation.

Dr James Vant

We wish to make it clear that statements quoted in the article "Air safety drill faces shake up" (13 September) that pre-departure information given in aircraft was "kidding everybody that everything is going to work out fine" and that airlines "ought to get down to something more useful to the passengers" were not views of Dr Vant, chairman of the Aviation Study Group; he was repeating the opinions of others in order to explore their arguments.

FOREIGN

Old guard remember Russian revolution

Thousands of elderly and disgruntled Communists marked the 81st anniversary of the Russian Revolution, marching with red banners and calling for President Yeltsin's resignation. But most Russians were apathetic towards the holiday, and the turnout was far lower than organisers had predicted. In a televised address Mr Yeltsin said his Communist opponents were themselves enjoying the fruits of democracy and ignoring old communist ideals.



Russian protesters burn a US dollar bill in St Petersburg.

John Glenn returns to Earth

The world's oldest astronaut John Glenn, 77, returned to Earth at Cape Canaveral aboard the space shuttle *Discovery*, 36 years after he became the first American in space. Within minutes of landing, an exuberant Glenn called out that he felt fine. "This is PS2," he said, referring to his status as payload specialist number two. "I'm better known to a lot of you as John, and I want to rephrase a statement that I made a long, long time ago, except this time it is: One-g and I feel fine."

Indonesians lynch murder suspects

A mob in the Indonesian town of Pemalang, 215 miles east of Jakarta, set fire in a van containing five suspected murderers. The mob beat three of them to death and thousands rioted when police rescued the remaining two and refused to hand them over. The protesters believed the men were among the ninja-style killers who in recent months have murdered at least 140 people.

Nuclear test sanctions succeed

India and Pakistan welcomed President Clinton's decision to waive some of America's sanctions on them in light of promises by both countries to stop nuclear testing. The sanctions have affected Pakistan more than India, jeopardising badly needed loans from the International Monetary Fund.

Tajikistan rebels hold government troops

Tajikistan's government said rebels were retreating but still holding its troops hostage. The revolt has claimed around 280 lives since Wednesday. A five-year civil war between the secular government, and the mostly Muslim opposition formally ended last year.

German prostitutes may get dole

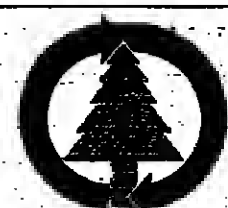
Up to half a million German prostitutes may soon be able to claim unemployment benefits, state pensions and other employee rights. Germany's new Social Democrat family minister, Christine Bergmann, said a draft law strengthening their legal standing was to be introduced to parliament.

Pro-Islamic mayor barred from office

Istanbul's pro-Islamic mayor has been expelled from office after being convicted of inciting religious hatred by reading aloud an Islamic poem at a rally. Recep Tayyip Erdogan's conviction, for which he was sentenced to 10 months, bars him from ever again holding public office.

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Le nouveau Conran est arrivé: 'We were led to expect something more audacious,' complained the restaurant critic of *Le Figaro*

Trust defeats hunt lobby on stag ban

BY MARK ROWE

MOVES BY a rebel group to overturn the National Trust's ban on stag hunting on its lands were overwhelmingly defeated last night.

Almost 40,000 National Trust members rejected calls by a breakaway group to raise the ban. The group, Friends of the National Trust (Font), a broadly pro-hunting lobby, had accused the Trust of failing to stand up for the countryside and ignoring the wishes of major land donors when it banned hunting.

The vote in Cardiff came after one of the stormiest Annual General Meetings in the Trust's 103-year history, at which it was accused of "betrayal" and "urban political correctness".

A resolution claiming that the ban on stag hunting violated the wishes of Sir Richard Acland, who transferred his West Country estate to the Trust on the condition that stag hunting would continue on his Holnicote Estate, was rejected by 36,795 votes to 23,885.

A second resolution criticising the National Trust for its "failure to stand up for the countryside and its way of life" was rejected, as was a third resolution, which attacked the Trust for being over-bureaucratic and called for a review of its general policy.

The results were welcomed by Charles Nunneley, chairman of the Trust, who said the number of people voting reflected the general indifference felt by the rank and file membership towards Font.

"If our members had felt genuinely that we had pursued the wrong policy this would have provided the perfect opportunity for them to say so," Mr Nunneley said.

However, he admitted the resolutions had caused the ruling general council to look "carefully once again at our policy" and he said that the council was acutely aware of the financial hardships faced by many of its 700 tenant farmers.

However, Baroness Ann Mollath QC, a leading member of Font, felt that the Trust could not ignore the 23,000

members who had voted to support Font's actions.

Font also had sought election for seven of its members to the Trust's policy-making ruling council. In the event, just one, Hugh van Cutsem, a shooting companion of Prince Charles, was elected.

He said that his success showed that Font's view was worth listening to on a number of issues. "This sends a message that we're not just a single issue party," he said.

The ban on stag hunting was implemented last year, after an academic study found hunting caused deer great stress.

The Trust and anti-hunt pressure groups claimed Font was a single-issue group and criticised the Font members who stood for election for failing to declare their involvement in hunting.

Font member Richard Clegg QC said the ban on stag hunting violated the wishes of Sir Richard Acland, when he donated his Holnicote estate, as he had said the gift was conditional on the sport being continued on the land.

Mr Clegg told the meeting Sir Richard had informed the National Trust that to overrule him would be a betrayal of his wishes, and therefore the Trust was guilty of "broken promises".

Amid jeering and calls of "rubbish" he claimed that since stag hunting was banned in the West Country, deer numbers had dropped by 40 per cent and National Trust stalkers had shot far more stags than hunts had ever killed. "Stag hunting is the life blood of the moor," he said.

However, Jacob Simon, speaking on behalf of the Trust's council, said Sir Richard's wish was not legally binding.

"Given the compelling scientific evidence, the continuation of deer hunting is not compatible with the Trust's responsibilities," he said. "The Trust's obligations must come before the personal feelings of the minority who hunt."

'Where's the haggis?' sniffs French diner as Conran opens in Paris

FROM JOHN LICHFIELD in Paris

"ALCAZAR? It looks more like Alcazar," said the balding Frenchman at the next table. "No I don't mean it. I'm just trying to adopt an English sense of humour to go with the food. How am I doing?"

The Alcazar, Sir Terence Conran's attempt to out-brasserie the French on their home territory, opened its doors to the public in the heart of the Left Bank of Paris yesterday. Despite a minimalist response by the French press (much less entertained by the idea than the British press), Sir Terence filled all 218 tables for lunch by 1.15pm.

The consensus of opinion among the handful of lunchgoers I spoke to was that the food was "correct" but unexciting; the ambience pleasant but oddly, er, French.

One could see their point.

The most surprising thing about Sir Terence Conran's great adventure - bringing his acclaimed London brasserie formula to Paris - is how unsurprising and how unadventurous it is. Having set out to prove something, the Alcazar does not seem to have anything much to prove.

It is not so squashed as French bistros; the waiters are younger and more numerous but not as rude or humorous; the menu is shorter and the wine list has (something unheard of in Paris) a few New World wines.

The design is brighter and airier than the older Parisian brasseries, such as La Coupole, but not so different from the newer ones. There is an open kitchen down one side and black chairs and maroon, upholstered benches and brown

pebbly tiles. It has a vaguely institutional Thirties, Great Gatsbyish feel, as if one were eating in the first-class dining room of a pre-war ocean liner.

The food (cheaper than in London Conran eateries) looked fresh and wonderful, as if lovingly prepared from photographs rather than recipes. Lunch for two without much wine cost £553 (about £60). I had chicken soup with a poached egg and undetectable truffles followed by monkfish in saffron and postry. It tasted fine but unexciting. Safe. Even dull. Like French food prepared for an American palate.

Why is there not even one traditional British-type dish? This absence irritated at least one French luncher. "Where

can one get decent haggis in Paris, can you tell me please?" he asked plaintively.

I confess that, as a devotee of old-fashioned cooking, from cassoulet to bacon, egg and chips (though I draw the line at haggis), I went along determined to be unimpressed. I succeeded easily enough. My wife, who is much shrewder and always right about such things, thought that Sir Terence had got it just about right: not so un-French as to put off the very conservative French, but sufficiently different to become a trendy place for weekend lunches and weekend brunches.

One sole, elderly male diner, whom I accosted in the gents, said he had been happy enough with his food but not "épate" (astonished). "I came expecting to be either disgusted or delighted. I was neither. I suppose it will succeed well enough."

The food critic of *Le Figaro*, François Simon, said: "It's cooking so careful that it's almost insignificant... which is quite an art. It's a timorous response to the tastes of the time: we were led to expect something more audacious. But it's well thought out. It's cooking dressed up like a pop song, very professional, and catchy."

Despite having gone to such lengths to fit in, Sir Terence has managed to upset the restaurant *casa nostra* of Paris. In an interview in the magazine *Elle*, he said that service in many Parisian restaurants was "deplorable" and the food often "mediocre". The Alcazar, thus he implied, would be neither.

Such comments were the height of bad manners, retorted Jean-Paul Bucher of the Groupe Flo (which owns traditional brasseries as well as newer ones, of the Conran variety). "When you are invited to someone else's house, you bring a bunch of flowers for madame and you say the food is good, even when it isn't. This [Conran's] is the behaviour of a nerd."

One surprise was that yesterday's opening-day clientele was more elderly than the traditional Conran clientele at his London brasseries such as Quaglino's. There were many people in their fifties; a handful of mums being treated by sons. Overall, the lunchers were oldish, trendyish, Leftish - in other words typical Parisian Left-bankers of the well-heeled 1990s kind, not the bohemian 1950s kind.

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Facing the consequences: children's shoes are used in a therapy session for sex offenders at the pioneering Thames Valley Project

JOHN LAWRENCE

Action urged on paedophiles of tomorrow

THE AUTHOR of the biggest ever Home Office study into child abuse has warned that urgent action must be taken to prevent a hard core of teenage sex offenders from becoming the next generation of untreatable predatory paedophiles.

The 200-page report into the effectiveness of treatment programmes for child abusers, reveals that 40 per cent of "highly deviant" recidivist paedophiles do not respond to treatment.

Psychologists believe they have become so entrenched in their behaviour that they may never learn to control their urges or to accept that what they are doing is wrong.

Richard Beckett, the author of the report which is due to be published later this month, told the *Independent on Sunday* the most serious paedophiles could only be treated if they were picked out at a young age.

He said: "We need to identify them and really put work into them so we don't see them for the first time at the age of 40 when they are unsalvageable."

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

Mr Beckett, a forensic psychologist at the Oxford Forensic Service, said young men under 21 carried out one third of sexual assaults in Britain.

"There is a small minority of them that are the recidivist paedophiles of the future. Most of these people start offending in adolescence," he said.

Researchers have built up sufficient expertise to be able to identify the recidivist paedophile from a series of common characteristics.

A man who has failed to form any serious adult sexual relationships, and has a criminal record which includes at least four non-sexual offences and two sexual ones, is reckoned to have at least a 40 per cent likelihood of repeat attacks.

Mr Beckett said: "We are pretty sophisticated now at identifying the recidivist paedophiles, but what we are not able to do is recognise the younger ones who are just starting off and will become fixated."

Because of the concerns, a pioneering sex offenders pro-

ject in Oxfordshire, backed by the Home Office, is to begin work with 11 to 18-year-olds who display what are termed "sexually concerning behaviours".

This may include indecent exposure, voyeurism, obsession with pornography, or rape. Trudi Annetts, social worker with the Thames Valley Project, said: "The thinking is that early intervention gives more capacity for change. If they learn that their behaviour is wrong they may well not develop into more serious behaviour as adults."

The Home Office research, which was carried out by a team of psychologists based in Oxford, Birmingham and Wales, investigated the treatment of child abusers being held in six prisons.

Nearly 86 per cent of those who had committed less serious offences and accepted the harm done to their victims, responded to the treatment and had a reduced risk of re-offending. But 40 per cent of the "highly deviant" paedophiles studied failed to respond in any way to treatment.

Nicotine gum and patches to be sold in pubs and clubs

BY MARIE WOOLF Political Correspondent

NICOTINE GUM is to be sold in pubs, clubs and corner shops alongside cigarettes, following a landmark ruling by the Government's medicines regulator.

The Department of Health's medicines watchdog has lifted a ban on selling Nicorette chewing gum outside chemists to help people give up smoking.

The move, to be announced this month, is the first step in a major review of government policy on smoking and health.

It comes on the eve of a White Paper in which ministers

will announce plans to hand out free nicotine gum and patches to those on low incomes.

Under the current law, nicotine gum can only be sold if a pharmacist is present to give advice on its use. This means that people who want the gum outside normal chemist opening hours often resort to buying cigarettes to curb their cravings.

The ruling on nicotine gum by the Medicines Control Agency opens the route for nicotine patches and stronger nicotine-based products to be sold by ordinary shopkeepers,

publicans and restaurateurs. "It's absurd that you can buy cigarettes anywhere and at any time of day or night but with pharmaceutical products it's much more difficult to get access to them," said Martin Jarvis, Principal Scientist at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

"We know that nicotine replacement helps people to quit and making it more widely available is a good thing."

The gum, which releases low levels of nicotine when chewed, does not contain the tar which causes cancer. Each

piece of 2mg gum produces the same amount of nicotine as half a cigarette.

The decision will break the monopoly of chemists such as Boots which are the only retailers allowed to sell nicotine replacement therapies under the current law.

The announcement will be welcomed by anti-smoking campaigners who say it will help thousands of people to quit. Nicotine replacement therapies

double the chance of stopping smoking.

The Medicines Control Agency, a Government body attached to the Department of Health, is staffed by scientists and independent experts.

It decided to lift the ban on selling 2mg nicotine gum after an application by the manufacturer of Nicorette, Pharmacia & Upjohn. The Department of Health will put the watchdog's decision out to consultation in

the next fortnight. The ruling will pave the way for brands of 2mg nicotine gum, other than Nicorette, to be sold in corner shops, pubs, bars and supermarkets.

The gum, which costs about £6 a pack, will still come with instructions for use, advice about storing the medicine and information about possible side effects.

The gum is designed to be gradually phased out as the former smoker's addiction to nicotine lessens.

The Department of Health

is planning to make nicotine replacement therapy available to heavy smokers who would not buy it in the shops. It wants to target people on low incomes but fears that putting patches and gum on prescription would cost millions of pounds.

It is examining ways of means testing so that only those who cannot afford nicotine replacement or are in dire medical need will have access to free gum or patches.

The government also aims to take steps to segregate smokers in pubs and clubs to help

combat passive smoking. It wants restaurants and pubs to introduce extractor fans to suck up smoke but will stop short of introducing a total ban to avoid accusations of "nannyism". It also fears that a ban on smoking in public places could lead to pub closures and job losses.

In the UK 120,000 people die prematurely each year from smoking-related diseases. The success rate for quitting smoking "cold-turkey" without help from experts, doctors or a replacement therapy, is about 3 per cent.

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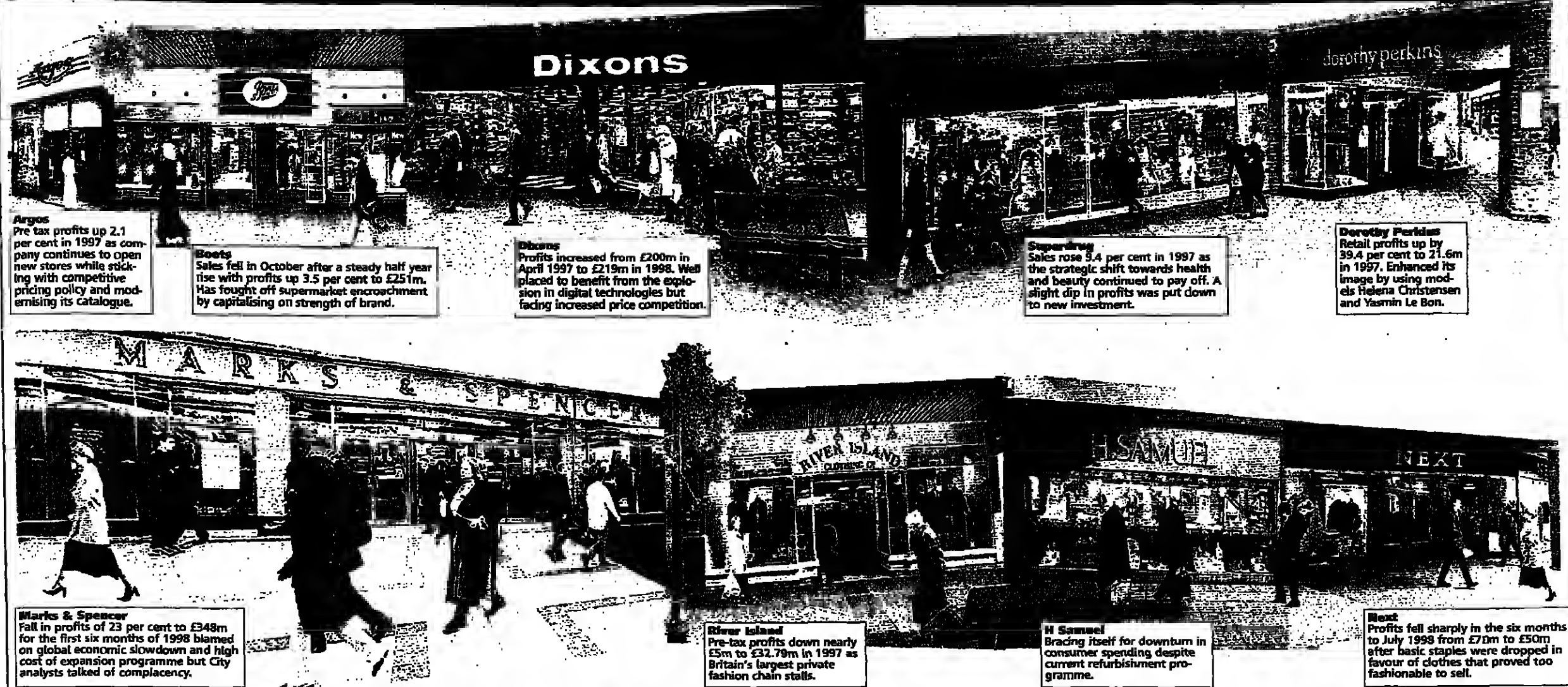
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JP 11/15/98

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE HIGH STREET



Argos
Pre-tax profits up 2.1 per cent in 1997 as company continues to open new stores while sticking with competitive pricing policy and modernising its catalogue.

Boots
Sales fell in October after a steady half year rise with profits up 3.5 per cent to £251m. Has fought off supermarket encroachment by capitalising on strength of brand.

Dixons
Profits increased from £200m in April 1997 to £219m in 1998. Well placed to benefit from the explosion in digital technologies but facing increased price competition.

Superdrug
Sales rose 5.4 per cent in 1997 as the strategic shift towards health and beauty continued to pay off. A slight dip in profits was put down to new investment.

Dorothy Perkins
Retail profits up by 39.4 per cent to £1.6m in 1997. Enhanced its image by using models Helena Christensen and Yasmin Le Bon.

Marks & Spencer
Fall in profits of 23 per cent to £348m for the first six months of 1998 blamed on global economic slowdown and high cost of expansion programme but City analysts talked of complacency.

River Island
Pre-tax profits down nearly £5m to £22.9m in 1997 as Britain's largest private fashion chain stalls.

H Samuel
Bracing itself for downturn in consumer spending despite current refurbishment programme.

Next
Profits fell sharply in the six months to July 1998 from £70m to £50m after basic staples were dropped in favour of clothes that proved too fashionable to sell.

The shops of Basingstoke, described by an estate agent as the archetypal town of middle Britain: its experiences do not reflect the downturn revealed in Marks & Spencer's first profits fall for 10 years

PHOTO MONTAGE BY IAN BARTHOLOMEW

Middle England carries on shopping

WELL-DRESSED and purposeful, the people wandering through the pedestrianised heart of Basingstoke are typical of a new breed of sophisticated shopper which is far more interested in a good-quality buy than a bargain.

Young professional women spill out into the central shopping lanes at lunchtime and sift through the latest styles in the middle-market clothing stores that dominate the town. Couples study the latest digital offerings in Dixons. Housewives pause to look at jewellery.

According to estate agents Hillier Parker, Basingstoke is the archetypal town of middle Britain. If the economic downturn is going to hit the high street anywhere - as executives

at Marks & Spencer claimed it had when they sought to explain the company's first fall in profits in 10 years - it should be here. Yet this Hampshire town appears, so far at least, to be the place of the choosy consumer. People are still spending - but with a lot more care.

The number of shopping visits in Basingstoke is about 1.2 million and, according to Paul Littlehales, who manages an area of sheltered shops called The Malls, has continued to grow. People are spending their money with the emphasis on "wants" rather than "needs", he says, and as shopping becomes more of a leisure activity, "the quality of what they are buying is increasing".

Competition between towns

to attract shoppers intensifies in this sort of climate, which is why the £250m being ploughed into a makeover of New Market Square, adjacent to the existing shopping area, is so important to Basingstoke's future prosperity. It has already attracted two key anchor stores, Debenhams and BHS. The plan is to attract good-quality shops. "We wouldn't entertain a cheaper operation coming in now," Mr Littlehales says.

The discerning shopper is hungry for labels such as Jigsaw and Gap. Kelly Baxter, a 21-year-old recruitment consultant, says shops have a tendency to stock the "end of ranges" rather than the most up-to-date styles. Other buyers look forward to seeing bigger shops

in the town and more "quality" goods.

According to women shoppers, M&S has a lot of work to do in regaining their confidence. Luxury looks are popular but, says Zoe Skinner, a 23-year-old secretary, there is a lack of choice for younger women and the jeans are "very old-fashioned".

Fiftysomethings Sandra Cooke and Val Sullivan were critical of the store's "narrow range" and "ugly" clothes. "We walked in and came straight out again," Mrs Cooke said. "The styles don't seem to change from year to year."

The fashion chain Next, however, brought in a new

buyer after its summer shift to more up-to-the minute fashions failed to win custom. The autumn and winter move back to casuals and sportswear has gone down better with shoppers all over the country.

For Sean Seabrook, a 32-year-old meteorologist, it is the only shop that offers good-quality, fashionable goods.

Dixons, the electrical-goods store, is in the fortunate position of being set to capitalise on the range of digital goods now coming on to the market, because of its central positioning on the high street.

People in Basingstoke said they would visit Dixons as part

of a high-street trawl for the best-value goods and saw the chain as a market leader.

New "lifestyle" lines of coloured and unusually shaped electronic equipment are also helping to hold sales steady. "I'll go for anything yellow and green and funky," said Jodie Haggerty, a 19-year-old call-centre manager. "I trust the name and there is a wide selection of goods here."

Despite talk of recession, shoppers are sticking with what they define as the "quality" of the Boots brand over that of Superdrug, which they saw as "cheaper" and "more down-market".

Superdrug has lately shifted its focus to health and beauty products, while Boots, Britain's

sixth-largest retailer, has held its own after worries that the main supermarkets were encroaching on its territory. It has introduced a loyalty card and experimented with dentistry and doctor's surgeries.

"The Boots gift selection is excellent and the kitchenware is really good," said 24-year-old student Xara Price.

H Samuel, the jewellery chain currently struggling at the lower end of the market, is criticised by shoppers for its "unfashionableness" and "uninspiring" range.

H Samuel is under pressure from catalogue showrooms such as Argos, which is re-vamping its brochures with a more stylish presentation.

"I would like to see it offer

a more solid, less flimsy range," said 45-year-old Wendy Beagley.

Her feelings were echoed by information-technology consultant Liaquat Khan, 27. "The look of the watches is a bit old-fashioned," he said. "This chain has looked the same for years and it could do with bringing its image up to date."

If the impressions of shoppers in Basingstoke accurately reflect the broad shift in fortunes of the major high-street retailers, then the stores with the most cause for concern will be those that are not responding to the growing clamour for "quality". "Till 'em high and sell 'em cheap" is the Sixties shopping slogan that has finally bitten the dust.

Royal aide briefed us, says TV company in Charles row

THE CAREFULLY planned campaign to re-create the image of Prince Charles was in disarray last night after claims that a senior Royal aide gave the go-ahead to the makers of a programme which claims he wants the Queen to abdicate.

The Prince of Wales took the unprecedented step on Friday of issuing a joint denial with his mother, condemning a London Weekend Television programme to be shown this evening which alleges that he wants the Queen to stand aside so he can be King. In his statement the Prince of Wales stressed his abiding "admiration and affection" for the Queen.

Yesterday the row deepened when LWT defended its documentary, saying that a senior Buckingham Palace aide gave them the go-ahead just days ago after a total of four briefings were held with the official. All the main topics of the programme, including the abdication question, were discussed and approved.

Friends and supporters quickly emerged to rubbish the abdication story. Among the first was Jonathan Dimbleby, who became close to the Prince while writing his authorised biography. He told BBC Radio 4's *Tonight* that he did not think Charles had even allowed himself to think the thought that was attributed to him.

JULIAN KOSOFF

He found the LWT claim "quite fantastic". "I can't believe for a moment that he would have allowed himself to speak of this, to intimate this. In any way to intimate to friends, let alone to a senior aide, however much he trusted that aide," Mr Dimbleby said.

But Mr Dimbleby's comments were sharply at odds with those of Stuart Higgins, former editor of *The Sun*. Mr Higgins is not just a man who once ran Britain's biggest selling tabloid; he also acted as a consultant to the LWT documentary makers and knows Camilla Parker Bowles from his days as a West Country reporter.

He was quoted in his old paper as saying that what the Royal aide told them was: "In an ideal world Prince Charles privately wishes the Queen would step aside and allow him to take over the throne."

As the St James's Palace's damage limitation exercise goes into overdrive, the Prince's advisers must be ruefully pondering how their year-long campaign to re-brand Prince Charles in the run-up to his 50th birthday went awry.

The carefully planned strategy was drawn up in the aftermath of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales in August last year, when there was a distinct

danger that a grieving nation might turn on Prince Charles. There were even mutterings that he should be "sacked" as heir apparent and Prince William should accede to the throne when the Queen died.

A new team of advisers - supposedly with PR savvy - were installed to improve the Prince's standing who set about drip-feeding the media stories that projected a new image of Charles, summed up in a headline last week: "Out goes potty Prince, in comes decent bloke Prince."

It emerged that he had stood up to his mother and demanded that the body of his divorced wife be flown back from Paris on a royal jet, rather than be returned in "a Harrod's van", as one courtier put it, and be given a proper state funeral.

However, the story spinning by the various "close friends" did begin to unravel with the recent serialisation of Penny Junor's book, *Charles: Victim or Villain*. Together with Mrs Parker Bowles, Prince Charles issued a statement denying they supplied sources. But its *raison d'être*, that Diana was as much to blame for the failure of their marriage, was still conveyed to the public.

As the hunt to unmask the Charles aide who made the

LWT claims gathered pace yesterday, it appeared a case of cock-up rather than conspiracy was to blame.

It is well known that the Prince would like more influence over the monarchy and has ideas about modernising it. Unfortunately, according to royal watchers, every claim on the future made by his advisers has the effect of implying that, at Buckingham Palace, they are rooted in the past. Thus an atmosphere of suspicion and rivalry has sprung up between the two palaces. In such an over-heated environment, an aide may well have spun into pure exaggeration when briefing the LWT researchers.

Next Friday at a Buckingham Palace party on the eve of Prince Charles's birthday, the Queen is set to make a speech praising his achievements. It will be a novel experience for the heir to the throne, rarely praised in public by a mother he has long felt does not appreciate what he does.

Meanwhile, privately Charles might well recall a speech in 1984 to the British Medical Association in which he said: "Perhaps we just have to accept it as God's will that the unorthodox individual is doomed to years of frustration, ridicule and failure in order to act his role in the scheme of things."

Leader, page 24

JOBWATCH

regardant due to trading weakness.
3 Kirkcaldy and Glasgow in Scotland. Stalybridge in Greater Manchester. 200 jobs at packaging firm McFarlane Group.
4 Northern Ireland. 200 jobs cut at clothing manufacturer Desmond & Sons, which supplies Marks & Spencer.
5 Cambridge. 100 staff at telephone company Ionica made redundant.
6 Yalding, Kent. 130 jobs to be cut at chemical giant Zeneca over the next three years.
7 London. 600 jobs to go by

Losses:
1 Bridgend, South Wales. 90 jobs lost at footwear manufacturer FII Group.
2 Clydebank, Scotland. 75 staff at engineering company Kvaerner Energy were made

redundant due to trading weakness.
3 Kirkcaldy and Glasgow in Scotland. Stalybridge in Greater Manchester. 200 jobs at packaging firm McFarlane Group.
4 Northern Ireland. 200 jobs cut at clothing manufacturer Desmond & Sons, which supplies Marks & Spencer.
5 Cambridge. 100 staff at telephone company Ionica made redundant.
6 Yalding, Kent. 130 jobs to be cut at chemical giant Zeneca over the next three years.
7 London. 600 jobs to go by



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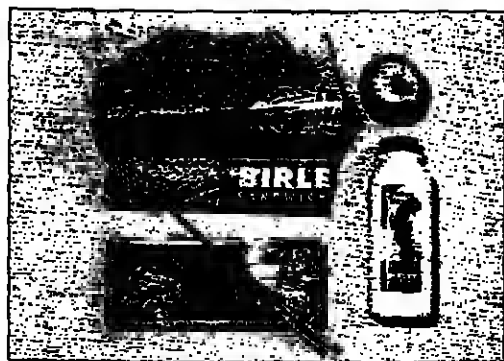
Gains:
8 Reigate, Surrey. 1,700 new jobs within 18 months at Pfizer, manufacturer of anti-impotence drug Viagra.
9 Edinburgh and Dingwall, Scotland. 1,000 jobs to be created by Virgin Rail at its booking centres.
10 Nationwide. 670 new jobs coming to the Yates Brothers Wine Lodges chain next year, when it will open 25 new branches.

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The choice and the choosers: clockwise from top left, lunches from Tesco, Birtley, The House and The Pie Man are sampled by Connor Dawson, left, Pippa Fairhall and Adam Chambers. They loved the sweets, but scorned the sushi. MYKEL NICOLAOU

Selling fast: the child's packed lunch at £7

THE traditional schoolchildren's packed lunch has become the pre-packed lunch. It can now be bought ready-made from a shop - at a premium.

Parents who have no time to prepare sandwiches for their children are increasingly relying on shop-bought fare. In the

wealthier areas of Britain, signs have appeared in delicatessens and coffee shops advertising a children's lunch service. On offer are treats such as stuffed ciabatta, seedless grapes and fresh fruit milkshakes - costing as much as £7 a day and often provoking classroom rivalry.

In Kensington, west London, The Pie Man sandwich shop offers a school packed lunch for £6.99. It contains four different sandwich triangles, a scotch egg, sausages, fruit and an array of little biscuits.

In Hampstead, north London, a coffee bar called The

BY VANESSA THORPE AND LIZA BECK

House is doing a roaring trade with a slightly cheaper deal. "We offer a school packed lunch for £3.75," said "Christian". "The children can have a sandwich, a soft drink, a piece of fruit and a packet of crisps."

Andrea Lowell, who teaches infants at a neighbouring independent day school, has noticed the trend. "Lunches are always a big topic of conversation and even of teasing," she said, adding that children were

often disappointed by the contents of the pack they had been bought. "Children are creatures of habit. They don't seem to have the same need for variety that adults have and they prefer the same biscuit or sandwich spread every single day."

Beyond the privileged neighbourhoods of London, other parents are far from impressed with the latest attempt to make a living from the requirements of schoolchildren.

Gill Fairhall, from Portsmouth, who has three children, said: "Everyone has to live their life in their own way, but it does seem extravagant. I prepare packed lunches every morning. I buy in bulk and keep stores in the cellar, so the children can have a little variety."

Mrs Fairhall, a full-time mother, says she would be happy to make packed lunches even if she had paid work. "It only takes five minutes and it is just a question of making the time," she said.

Her nine-year-old daughter Pippa usually takes a filled bagel to her Church of England school in Old Portsmouth, along with a sausage roll, a packet of crisps and a cake.

Connor Dawson, six, who attends a state school in neighbouring Havant, has less adventurous tastes. He takes Marmite sandwiches and a packet of crisps to school every day and accepts nothing else.

Ten-year-old Adam Chambers, who goes to Ditcham Park, an independent school in Petersfield, is used to a lunch of a sandwich, a yogurt, a piece of fruit and a sweet, prepared each day by his mother Gina. "There seems to be a lot of

competition between the boys," she said. "Adam sometimes comes home with an entirely different wrapper in his lunchbox and tells me he swapped."

Sampling the contents of five shop-bought packed lunches, Pippa, Connor and Adam were unanimous. They all swooped on the sweetest food first and, perhaps predictably, turned up their noses at a stylish Sashimi raw fish selection. "I think I'll pass," said Pippa.

Even The House's avocado-and-chicken sandwich was a little too exotic for this panel, as was a ciabatta roll filled with tomato and mozzarella. "I think Pippa was put off by the fact it was cold," her mother said. "At home she is used to ciabatta that has been warmed."

The sausages in the £6.99 lunch were universally approved of, as were the crisps and chocolate biscuits.

"Adam's school doesn't really approve of chocolate," Mrs Chambers said. "It was a bit of a novelty for him."

Parents who wish to pamper children now accustomed to pesto and avocado do still have an option in reserve for special occasions. Fortnum & Mason in Piccadilly offers a child's lunch box containing Cox's orange pippin biscuits, a tin of drinking chocolate, a banana, a pot of lemon curd, ginger biscuits and bon-bons for only £35.

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Black waiters banned at white weddings

BY JULIAN KOSSOFF

RACIST COUPLES are giving new meaning to the notion of a white wedding by refusing to let Asian waiters serve them at their wedding receptions. Catering workers from ethnic minorities are being banished to the kitchens, where they are given only the most menial tasks to perform.

Racism has become a significant problem for the catering industry, but those discriminated against too often feel they must stay silent, for fear of losing their jobs, union officials say.

"In some situations it is done quite subtly, but everyone understands what's going on," said Kashmir Bilgan, a regional organiser of the GMB union. "But there was a recent incident in which an Asian waiter was brutally told by the caterer to 'get out the back'. When he asked why, he was told: 'That's what they [the bride and groom] want.'"

"Some couples don't want to be served by black or Asian people, so they are left in the background doing menial jobs, such as chopping vegetables and washing pots," she said.

A Commission for Racial Equality spokeswoman condemned the practice as "shocking and Neanderthal". The Government is tackling the issue by establishing a parliamentary catering sub-committee, headed by the first peer of Bangladeshi origin, Baroness Pola Uddin.

Ms Bilgan is based in Leicester, a city with one of the largest Asian communities in the country. A quarter of the city's population - more than 60,000 people - are Asian. "This is the Cinderella sector. Abusive practices are rife," she said. Catering workers are among the lowest paid in the country. Wage rates are as low as £1.50 per hour and 12-hour shifts are common.

Aggravating the situation is the widespread use of illegal immigrants who do not officially exist and are not protected by

the employment laws. "People are afraid and don't complain," Ms Bilgan said. "Employers hire and fire at will. Racism goes unseen, rights are eroded and wages are kept down. But the workers' attitude is any job is better than no job."

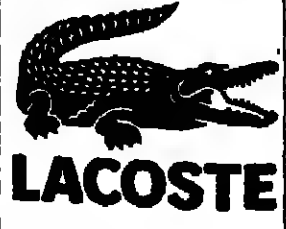
Only a handful of individuals has challenged the status quo. In one of the few cases that made it to a tribunal, Nigerian-born Richard Olufeko proved that Charco's Wine Bar & Restaurant in Chelsea, west London, had discriminated against him on racial grounds after sacking him and replacing him with a white head chef.

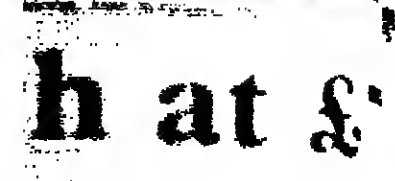
The catering sector was relatively unregulated and often unprofessionally run, said Karen Keates, spokeswoman for the Commission for Racial Equality. "Even four and five-star hotels treat ethnic minorities as second and third-class citizens," she said.

"The top jobs don't go to people from the ethnic minorities. They are discriminated against and only allowed to do menial jobs in the kitchen where they are invisible to the public."

British-born Trevor Douglas, the executive sous chef at a luxury hotel in upstate New York, said he went to America because he could see he would never get to the top at home.

"There are loads of cases where black chefs had people below them promoted over them because they were white," he told a catering magazine.





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Mother fights for MS drug

A MOTHER of two, diagnosed with multiple sclerosis last year, is leading a battle to get drug treatment denied to her and thousands of fellow sufferers.

Caroline McLoughlin, 43, faces growing disability and confinement to a wheelchair unless she can have interferon-beta, which has been shown to slow the disease's progress. Only 1,100 of the 10,000 sufferers in Britain judged suitable for treatment with the drug (according to Department of Health guidelines) are receiving it because of doubts about its effectiveness and worries about its cost - £10,000 per patient per year.

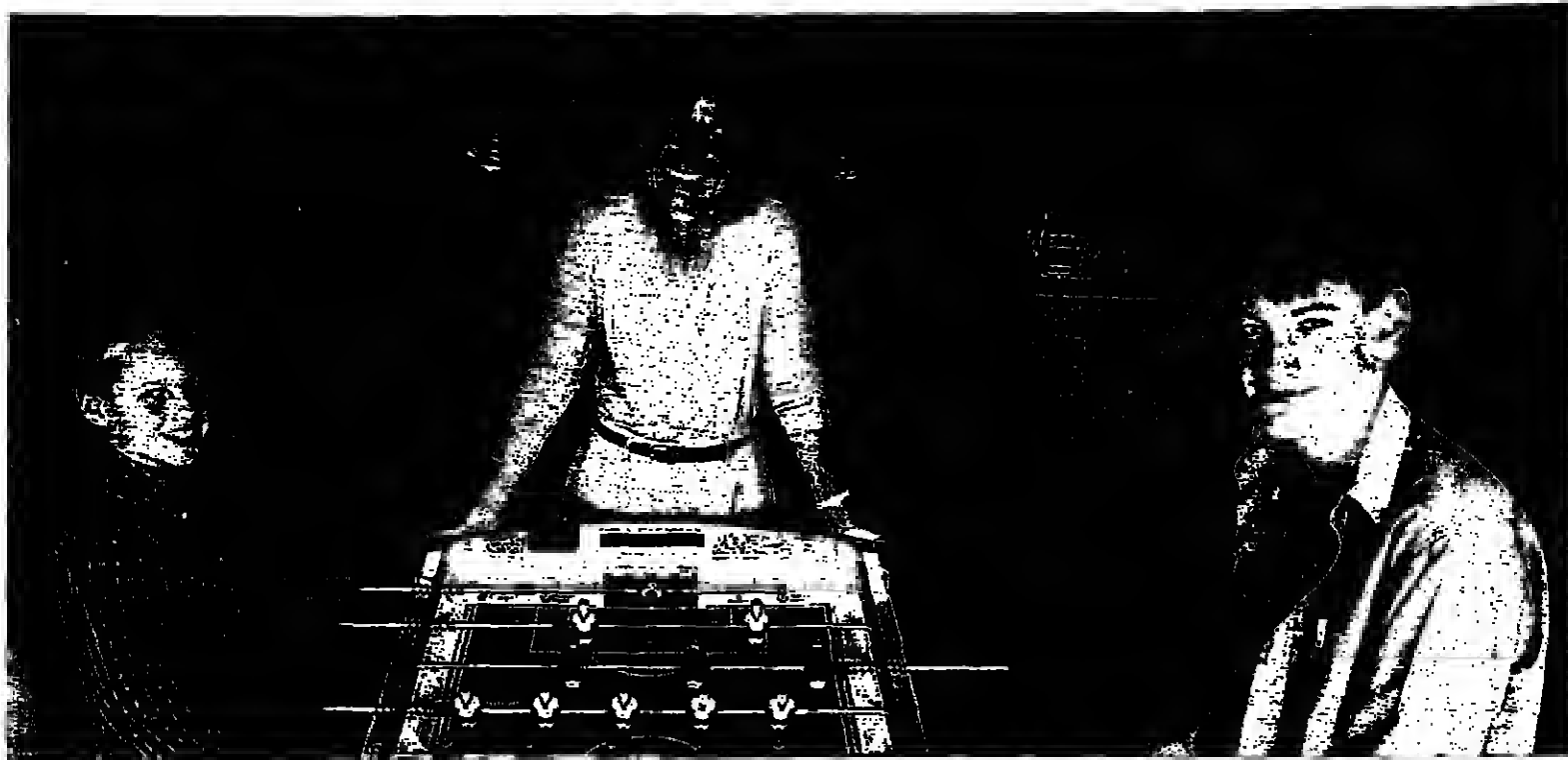
The case highlights the pressures on the NHS caused by expensive new drugs. Two stud-

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

ies in *The Lancet* medical journal confirm that the drug delays progression of the disease, but some health authorities still refuse to pay for it.

One study of 560 patients in nine European countries found that the drug reduced the number of times patients relapsed by a third. In a study of 718 patients with the disease more advanced, the drug delayed worsening of the symptoms.

Mrs McLoughlin, from Nottingham, said that without the drug she feared becoming rapidly unable to care for her two sons, aged 13 and nine. "It is a big question-mark hanging



over you. You know you are going to have another relapse but you don't know when. The uncertainty is horrible and each time it happens you are left a bit more disabled. If I could get interferon-beta it would largely take that uncertainty away."

She discovered she had MS

after developing a creeping numbness which left her unable to cook, walk or drive.

"It started in my feet and gradually spread through my body until I was completely numb from the neck down. It was an incredible shock to have it confirmed as MS. All I

could think of was that I wouldn't see my kids grow up."

Her shock turned to anger when she discovered that although her type of disease made her an ideal candidate for treatment with interferon-beta, there was no money for it. The £200,000 allocated to the drug

in Nottingham was enough to fund only 18 of the 100 patients judged able to benefit from it.

Mrs McLoughlin said: "I was being told there was a drug that could help prevent me being in a wheelchair but the health authority did not feel it was sufficiently important to

pay for it. I decided to fight not just for me but for the 80 others who are not getting it."

She has bombarded the chief executive of Nottingham Health Authority with letters demanding increased funding. Her specialist, Professor Lance Blumhardt, consultant neuro-

Demanding the right to be treated: Caroline McLoughlin, with her boys Michael, left and James. Without the drug - that costs £10,000 a year - she fears she will become increasingly disabled and may not live to see them grow up

STUART TOLLIN

logist at Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham, and an investigator in one of *The Lancet* studies, said rationing of the drug was "inevitable" when it could prevent the disease leading to inflammation of the brain causing irreversible damage. "It is the first drug to work on MS in 150 years."

In the UK, he added, 1.5 per cent of MS patients were getting the drug compared with 3 per cent in Turkey and 15 per cent in Australia.

A spokeswoman for Nottingham Health Authority said funding for interferon-beta would be reviewed, adding: "Any decision we make has to be taken in the context of all developments in medicine."

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NEWS MONKEY

A simian slant on last week's news ...

FAMILY PAPER. It is a tried-and-tested rule that governmental pronouncements on the family always backfire, but it seems that each new government has to learn this lesson for itself. While it is clear that the traditional Tory family unit of husband, wife and 18-year-old nightclub hostess is a thing of the past, the modern Labour family of husband, wife, health visitor and marriage counsellor may still be ahead of its time. The *Daily Mail* came out firmly against the proposals, presumably on the grounds that if Labour's plans had been implemented, Della and Grant Bovey might have stayed married, Anne Diamond's husband wouldn't have a black eye, and the *Daily Mail* would be about four pages long.

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE. As the Democrats miraculously gain five seats in the House of Representatives in the mid-term elections, we must now accept that Bill Clinton's Oval Office dalliance with a chunky intern



was actually a good idea - high-risk perhaps, but it paid off. Successful political strategies from US elections often find their way to Britain, although it seems unlikely that Super Family Guy Tony Blair will attempt a twodry affair while growth slows to 1 per cent. It does, however, provide a unique incentive to get the ball rolling.

AIR RAGE. The phenomenon of air rage is often used by airlines to imply that human beings are becoming less civilised, as if we had nothing at all to be less civilised about. It seems more likely that the increasing incidence of air rage is the fault of the airlines, which are clearly targeting the criminal classes as customers. Who do they think is going to be on a £39 return flight to Malaga? A proposed world-wide blacklist for naughty passengers may see cheap holiday destinations fill up with criminals who are unable to get a flight back to the no-go area they call home. Tenerife and Majorca could eventually become penal islands, for which their infrastructure is remarkably well suited, as visitors well know.

YOU KNOW WHO? News Monkey has decided to observe the BBC's blanket ban on discussing the sexuality of a certain someone, just for fun. Therefore, this column will solemnly undertake to avoid any mention of Peter Mandelson's -



whoops! this is harder than it looks! - alleged things from now until such time as BBC infighting makes it news all over again.

EURO STEPS. In an attempt to impress Germany's new Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, Peter Mandelson said "when" rather than "if" regarding - please, it's nothing to do with that - the euro. It seems we will almost certainly join the single currency in 2002 provided that 1) the economic conditions make joining in Britain's interest, and 2) we're not all dead by then.

MILLENNIUM BUG CHAOS. While most of us are sanguine about the idea that, come 1 January 2000, our high scores on *Tomb Raider* may be lost for ever, reports show that senior military officers are planning for a Millennium Bug "doomsday scenario", preparing to deploy troops where widespread disruption to services may cause rioting. The fact that senior military strategists think we are all going to wake up early on New Year's Day and riot because the fax machine is showing the wrong date reveals just how out of touch with the world the Armed Forces are. The reason is sadly obvious: not enough gays.

Tim Dowling

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Yes, I want to help...



Another night, another jam: Friday's rush hour at the M6/M5 interchange in Birmingham, Britain's busiest, where a six-mile tailback is considered not too bad

RICHARD LEA-HAIR / NEWSTAM

Welcome to Britain's most magnificent jam

BY SOPHIE GOODCHILD

THE RIPPLE of brake lights down the stream of traffic signals the start of another day of tailbacks and frayed tempers at the most congested traffic blackspot in Europe. By mid-night, 160,000 motorists will have crawled past the M6/M5 interchange, near Birmingham in the West Midlands. This is double the number of vehicles the road was designed to carry.

For drivers, the intersection is a canker at the heart of Britain's overloaded motorway network. For motoring organisations like the AA and the RAC, it is the snarl-up that never ends. The police who patrol the motorway have to deal with more than 100 incidents in a typical day. The slightest problem, such as debris on the overloaded carriageway, is enough to upset the road's delicate equilibrium and bring miles of traffic to a standstill. The only lull comes between midnight and the early hours. Then it all starts again.

The latest quarterly figures, released last week by the Department of Transport, show that traffic growth is showing no signs of slowing. The number of vehicles on Britain's motorways has increased by 2 per cent in a year. A survey by Lex Vehicle Leasing shows congestion is costing business £4.5bn a year.

Sgt Barry Masoo, of the Central Motorway Police Group, is relaxed. Today he regards the traffic as light, although six miles of tailback would be described as hell by the average motorist.

It is just after 9am and the illuminated motorway boards are still flashing. They warn drivers to slow to 30 mph as they approach the "crossroads of the country", as the notorious intersection is known. The signs are often left flashing through the day when, as is frequently the case, the rush-hour chaos leaves a legacy of tailbacks.

On the northbound carriageway, the traffic is crawling, as the five lanes of the M6 merge into three. Southbound, the faces of drivers are con-

torted by frustration as they weave across the carriageway to claim places in the proper lane.

The intersection and the M6 itself are victims of their own design. Built 24 years ago, the motorway is chronically overloaded, but it cannot be widened to meet the increasing traffic demands because it is elevated in many places.

The M6 here also has more junctions, which slow the traffic flow, than a rural motorway. In one 15-mile stretch there are eight junctions.

A relief road is being planned to take traffic off the motorway and there has been an experiment to use the hard shoulder as an extra lane. In the meantime, motorists must tolerate the congestion.

The stretch of road to the intersection has seen more than its fair share of tragedy. Last year, three people died in a 160-car pile-up, in thick fog - the biggest motorway accident in this country. The heat from burning cars melted the road surface. In another incident, a tanker shed part of its load of 22 tons of cows' blood. There were fears that it was contaminated with BSE, and the carriageway was closed for nearly a day while it was cleaned up.

The economic importance of the motorway also makes it a target for terrorists. The IRA once left a bomb under the concrete carriageway supports, a few miles north of the infamous intersection. The motorway was closed for several days, and freight companies lost millions of pounds in business.

"You can go for days without anything but when something does happen it can be huge because of the volume of traffic," said Sgt Masoo. After 10 years patrolling the M6, he confesses to having developed a deep affection for this stretch of the motorway, despite its bad reputation. "It is a unique world and you develop a very territorial attitude towards the road, like a sailor getting attached to his ship," he said. "All the police who work here are very

proud and fond of the road. The environment can be very hostile so safety is paramount, but it can also be very pretty sitting here in traffic. The hard-core commuters learn to build their lives around it rather than battling against the delays."

In the control room, the

crew has been busily directing officers to breakdowns, minor accidents and oversized vehicles, and a report of "a kitchen unit on the carriageway".

Sgt Peter Williams started the day with a step ladder in lane

three, just in time for the start of the rush hour. Later he has to activate the debris warning again when a piece of tarpaulin lands on the M6. Another day, it could be swans mistaking the wet road for a river, or

people mistaking the road for a crossing. By lunchtime, there have been 18 incidents played out on a bank of monitors in the control room. They sit alongside a map of the motorway system which resembles the cross-section of an ants' nest. Out on the rain-spattered carriageway, the

traffic is building again. Most of the drivers are oblivious to the striking backdrop of smoking chimneys stacks, the gaily coloured flags of the Ikea store and the space-age architecture of the RAC traffic centre.

By 5pm, the variable message sign is warning of "Delays

M6 North" and the tailback is stretching to junction 10. The lorries and company cars cramping the length of the road are stationary and businessmen are forced to stare at the grubby backsides of Nissan trucks. For many, dinner will be cold by the time they reach home.



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Creeping off the brightest: no one disputes that Queen Elizabeth Boys is a very good school, but some parents argue that its selection policy lowers standards elsewhere. JOHN LAWRENCE

Top grammar under siege

ONE of Britain's most successful grammar schools is facing a determined attempt to force it to go comprehensive by parents opposed to selection.

The Campaign for State Education (Case) will use rules coming into force this month to hold ballots on whether selection should continue in Britain's 166 grammar schools. Case's first target is Queen Elizabeth Boys' School in Barnet, north London.

The school's academic results are high - last summer's A-level results ranked it the top state school in London - but Case questions whether its performance is due to the quality of teaching or whether selection merely allows it to cream off the brightest boys in north London. It believes selection restricts parental choice, forcing other schools to take a higher proportion of disruptive pupils

and making competition for places ever fiercer.

But QE Boys' is popular; around 3,000 prospective parents visited the school's open evening last week and the school anticipates more than 1,000 applications for next autumn's intake.

QE Boys' was founded in 1573 for "the training of boys in manners and learning" under a Royal charter granted by Elizabeth I. It lies in 23 acres on the edge of the Hertfordshire green belt and facilities include an Eton Fives court. It went comprehensive in 1971 but, despite great local opposition, went grant-maintained in 1989 and wholly selective in 1995. It takes 160 boys a year on the basis of an entrance exam and 30 on musical ability. It will vigorously contest any moves to abolish selection.

BY MARK ROWE

Jenny Brown, a member of Case and the action group Barnet Parents, predicts that QE Boys' will be targeted once the regulations are passed in Parliament. "I would be very surprised if some parents didn't take up the ballot option," she said, adding that selection created the risk of self-fulfilling prophecies. "If you're told you're good you go for it. But if you fail or are rejected then your self-esteem goes the other way. Selection affects all pupils and parents in the borough."

The reasons why parents send their children to QE Boys' are complex. While many wholeheartedly endorse the ethos of selection, others say they are compromising their beliefs. "I believe in the comprehensive system. I think selection

is wrong," said one mother whose child has been at the school for three years. "But we've looked at some of the local comprehensives and were appalled by what we saw with pupils openly disobeying teachers. There should be freedom of choice but there isn't."

One father, who had travelled from Wimbledon in south London, said: "I feel very sad about having to apply here. But we're dealing with my son's future. I can't hold him back in the hope that will help other schools improve in a few years. It will be too late for him by then."

Other parents fear a return to the comprehensive fold would dilute standards. "Academic results were what attracted us. It impressed us that they don't take children because

of where they live," said Michele Benson, whose son started at the school in September. "I don't think everyone should go to local schools because standards would go down. Anybody could come in and I wouldn't like that."

Other parents in the borough made a deliberate choice not to send their children to QE Boys' and maintain that local comprehensives offer excellent schooling. Pat Hemmens, whose sons went to the nearby East Barnet comprehensive, said the peer pressure created by selection was intolerable. "I refused to put my second son in for QE Boys' tests. He asked me whether I thought he wasn't clever enough, even though he is. People whose children are not quite so able are missing out. They aren't having bright kids in the classrooms to bring

the standards up." The threat to selection comes from the Education (Grammar Schools Ballots) Regulations 1998, under which a ballot can be held if 20 per cent of parents in feeder schools call for one.

Underhill junior school, a mile from QE Boys', 10 years ago sent up to 25 pupils to QE Boys' each year. Last September it sent just five. Its headmaster, Tony Godfrey, said: "One of the problems that parents face is that numbers leaving junior schools are very high and most schools have become oversubscribed."

A head at another feeder school said the intense competition caused "a lot of worry and sleepless nights" for parents. "They are putting themselves and their children through hell to get the school they want with little prospect of success."

Video invades schools' literacy hour

BY VANESSA THORPE

THE BRITISH video industry - fed up with being criticised for corrupting children and keeping them away from books - will this week take the case for its defence into the classroom.

The major video distributors have joined together to produce a free pack for all primary and middle schools in England and Wales. Using clips from nine popular children's films, including *Pocahontas* and *Toy Story*, the video pack comes with a series of suggested written exercises for children. The distributors hope it will be used in "literacy hour", the section of the daily curriculum set aside by the Government for reading.

Although the educational pack attempts to combat the notion that video is a mindless and potentially harmful form of entertainment, those who have worked to secure a permanent place for books in the school day are not pleased to hear that the enemy is about to invade.

"It seems defeatist to give up on the idea of books and resort to clips from films," said Brian Perman, executive director of the Book Trust. "It is a surprising idea. It may well be an innovative use of video, and I would agree that literacy hour should not become a purgatory for children. But I hope that most teachers would not be persuaded to turn to video rather than to books. It's rather unambitious."

The 60-minute video, called *Real Lives*, was developed by a team of literacy consultants working with teachers. It features excerpts from some of the most popular children's titles on the market, including *The Lion King*, *Pocahontas*, *The Secret Garden*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *Toy Story* and *The Borrowers*. Each clip is accompanied by a series of comprehension questions designed to develop literacy skills.

"Teachers are always looking for a variety of materials which will allow them to cover issues such as loneliness, bullying or xenophobia," said John Hickey, the freelance education consultant who has written the majority of the text which accompanies the video. "I would say this is a natural complement

to reading." He said the pack has been successfully piloted in Bristol schools. "After watching the video, pupils would be asked to discuss its content in small groups and then to write down their conclusions."

Richard Collins, head of education at the British Film Institute, agrees that reading need not suffer simply because the strong influence of film and television is acknowledged. "A lot of our research has shown that for slightly older children, films of the books are extremely effective at introducing the idea of reading a novel."

The British Video Association, the trade body which has produced *Real Lives*, stresses it is not a commercial exercise. "The pack is a teaching aid to improve media literacy," the explanatory notes state. The BVA argues that this is the kind of treatment of moral and social questions which builds up a child's understanding of the way in which real life relates to film and television drama.

The teacher will also have the option of focusing on a series of emotional themes raised in the film clips. Friendship and jealousy are topics suggested for discussion after the class is shown a scene from the film *Toy Story* in which Woody, the rejected cowboy doll, is envious of the new toy in the bedroom, the infamous Buzz Lightyear. In the same way, after watching an extract from *James and the Giant Peach*, the class would be invited to discuss bullying.

Literacy hour was developed by the Government as a way of attaining its target for national reading standards. It wants 80 per cent of 11-year-olds to read at their chronological age, or above, by the year 2002. The hour is comprised of 15 minutes' class work on a shared book, 15 minutes' work on spelling and grammar, 20 minutes to ability groups and a final 10-minute review with the whole class. At present, a month into the National Year of Reading, only 62 per cent of 11-year-olds have the right reading skills for their age.

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Foreign firms to vote in City

JAPANESE BANKS and American investment houses are to be given a vote in City of London elections in an unprecedented attempt to promote the Square Mile abroad.

The Corporation of London, the City's local authority, will introduce a Private Bill in Parliament within the next few weeks, seeking to change the law to let foreign companies vote in its elections.

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, supports the change and the measure will be given a fair wind by the Government, so it is almost certain to become law.

The move has infuriated the Conservatives, who plan to refer the matter to Lord Neill, the Commissioner on Standards in Public Life. "It is extraordinary when the Neill Committee has ruled out foreign donations to political parties that the Government wants to

BY RACHEL SYLVESTER
Political Editor

allow foreign companies to vote in British elections," a spokesman said.

Although partners in small firms, such as newsagents, already have a vote in City elections, the decision to extend the principle to large multinationals is far more controversial.

There are 50,000 businesses in the City and the 5,500 residents fear they are being sidelined. A survey found 65 per cent opposed giving firms a vote in the election of all councillors.

Under the Corporation's plans, every business with a base in the City will be eligible to vote in elections of councilmen to the ruling Court of Common Council. Although a British or EU national would physically have to cast the vote, they would be acting on the instructions of their directors

rather than as an individual.

The Corporation argues that any organisation which has property in the Square Mile should be involved in determining how it is run. It believes that this will encourage companies to invest in London, rather than Frankfurt or Paris.

Michael Cassidy, former head of the Corporation's policy committee, said: "Foreign companies are paying tax and it is a democratic principle that the people paying the tax should have a say in how it is spent."

Mr Prescott and Nick Raynsford, minister for London, are also convinced that the plan will generate investment in Britain.

Critics say the change will undermine the principle that the right to vote is accorded to people rather than property. It could also lead to moves by other local authorities to let foreign companies vote, to encourage investment from abroad.



The outgoing Lord Mayor of London Sir Richard Nichols (left), and his successor, Lord Levene

Lord Mayor cuts the flummery

FIRST GORDON Brown wore a lounge suit to the black-tie Mansion House dinner; then Lord Irvine asked to abandon the Lord Chancellor's breeches and tights, writes Rachel Sylvester.

Now the Lord Mayor of London has bowed to Cool Britannia and abandoned the centuries-old tradition of wearing a morning coat and badge of office to business meetings.

Lord Levene, who takes over at the Lord Mayor's Show next Saturday, has cut the number of fanfares played by trumpeters at banquets. The ancient ceremony of the "loving cup" - where a goblet of mulled wine is passed round the dinner table - will be limited to specific events.

And the Mayoral fleet of black Rolls-Royce Phantom Sixes is likely to be replaced with less "flashy" vehicles.

Lord Levene will wear traditional "Old Bailey" uniform on ceremonial occasions. "If he goes to a business meeting he will wear a business suit," a City source said. "He needs to be taken seriously."

REX FEATURES

Scousers score in Hollywood

BY VANESSA THORPE

THE MUSICAL duo behind the soundtrack of one of Britain's most successful new films, *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, are about to break into Hollywood.

David Hughes and John Murphy, Liverpoolian composers and musicians who always work together, have sold an astonishing 90,000 albums of their soundtrack for the violent gangster film, which stars Vinny Jones. (The soundtrack of another recent cult movie, *The Wedding Singer*, sold 45,000, and the British hit *Sliding Doors* has sold only 20,000.)

Now Hughes and Murphy are negotiating with New Line for the job of scoring *The Bachelor*, a big-budget romantic comedy starring Chris O'Donnell and Rene Zellweger. The screenplay has been written by Gary Sinyor, the writer behind the British comedies *Leon the Pig Farmer* and *Stiff Upper Lip*.

Hughes and Murphy take unusual routes to create their effects. In *Lock, Stock* they created the tense build-up to a gangland fight with the incongruous Zorba the Greek theme.

"I had to learn to play the bouzouki overnight," says John, 33. "It is such a fast piece of music that we had to edit the soundtrack together."

The pair shy away from musical clichés established since the Fifties. "The trouble is that a lot of them became clichés

precisely because they work," says John. "What's more, composers tend to come in on a film project towards the end, at a time when the director is often feeling a little under-confident and jumpy. You need a brave director to allow you to be different."

Alexander Stonor Saunders, a director of Soundtrack Music Associated, manages Hughes and Murphy and put them forward for *Lock, Stock*.

"The score for *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* would have been a loose and ineffective coalition of songs without David and John's original score," he says.

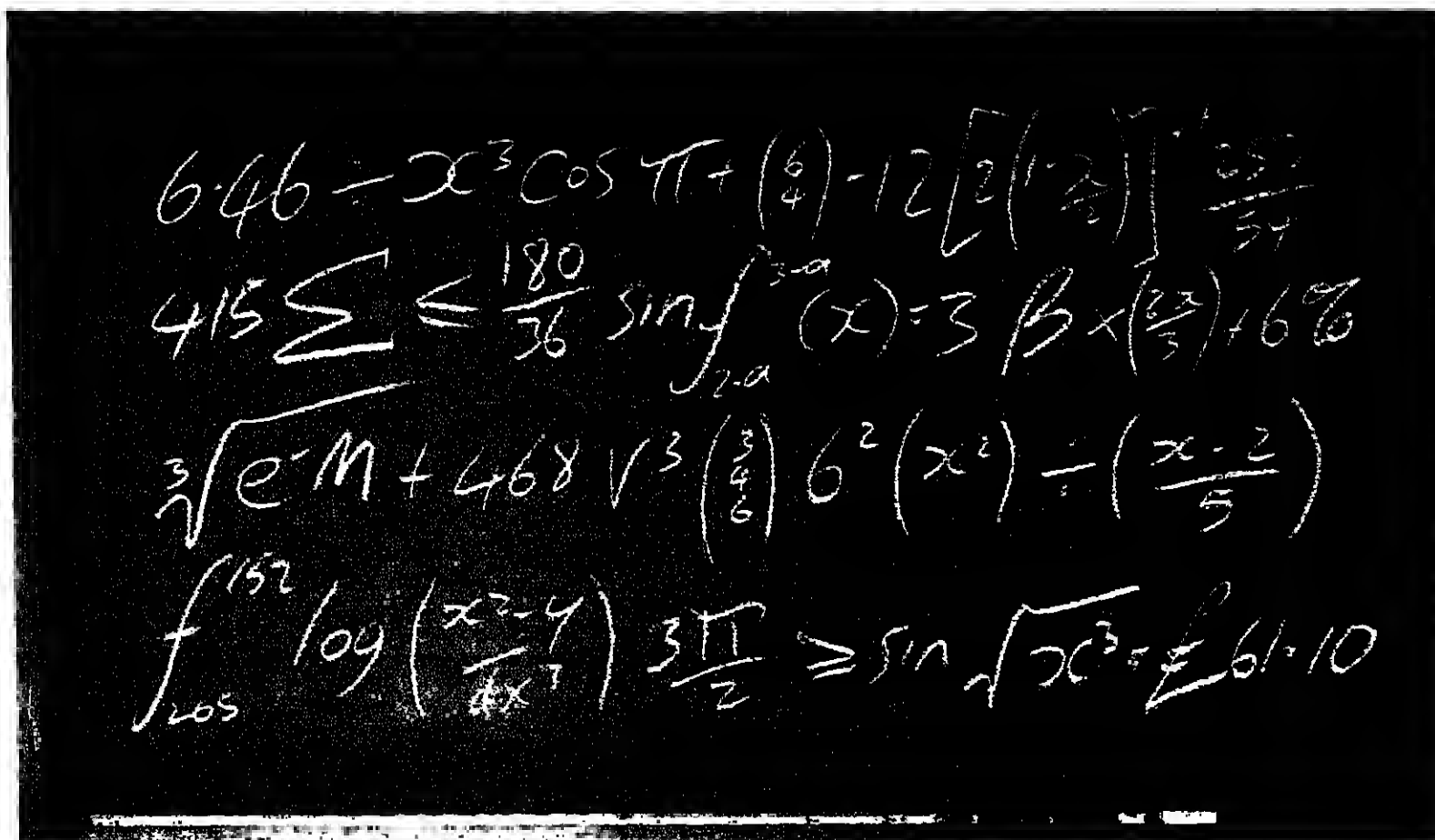
Their career in film music began after a chance encounter with would-be director Vadim Jean. Hughes and Murphy were offered the task of scoring *Leon the Pig Farmer*.

"When Vadim told us we had the job, we ran into Charing Cross Road to Zwermer's, the musical bookstore, to find a book about how to compose music for a film," says John.

Now the offers are coming in fast. Hughes and Murphy hope to make a comedy with Pilgrim Films called *The Bum's Rush*.

And they have also just sold their own screenplay - about a man who accidentally makes it big in the film business.

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مكتبة الامير

'There are thousands of bodies down there. An underwater town'

Rotting corpses, debris and muddy water fill the Honduran capital after Hurricane Mitch. Phil Davison reports from Tegucigalpa

"IT WAS LIKE that old Charlton Heston movie, *The Ten Commandments*, or as though a dam had burst. There was a wall of water coming at me, as high as a skyscraper and many times wider than the river used to be. It seemed to be coming over the top of the whole town."

Angel Ramon Moncada, a 53-year-old night-watchman at the riverside offices of the Honduran ministry of public health, ran uphill for his life when floods caused by Hurricane Mitch turned the Choluteca River into a torrent that would have stretched the imagination even of Hollywood.

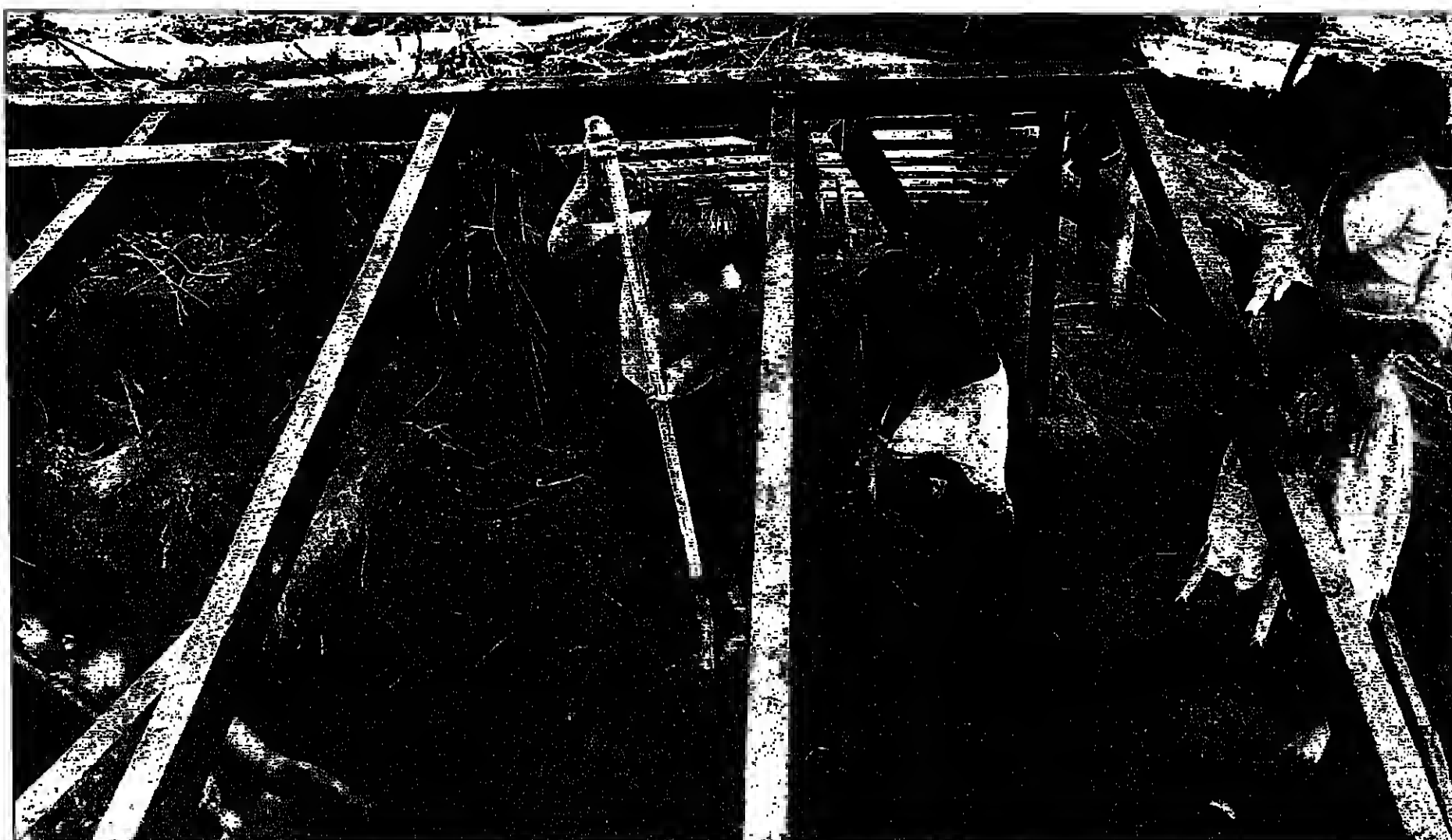
"It sounded like a thousand trains coming through a tunnel. I thought it was an earthquake," he said, drawing an arc through the air with his hands to describe how the torrent came a week ago yesterday. Although some heeded the government's warnings to leave last weekend, Moncada and his friends said thousands more remained, never dreaming the river could rise not only to their doorsteps but over their roofs and over 100ft bridges, reaching the height of eight-storey buildings and beyond.

In terms of death and destruction, the undulating Honduran capital - built on a series of hills by the Spanish conquistadores after discovering silver and massacring the local Mayan Indians - was the area worst hit. By the time it arrived here, in neighbouring Nicaragua and the rest of the Central American isthmus, Hurricane Mitch had been downgraded to a tropical storm, lulling residents into a sense of security. Many were asleep when their homes were swept away, and are now among an estimated 11,000 Hondurans still missing.

Official estimates now speak of more than 6,400 Hondurans dead. With close to 4,000 deaths in Nicaragua and possibly 1,000 more in Guatemala. El Salvador and Costa Rica, Mitch challenges the 1985 Armero, Colombia, mudslide as the worst disaster ever in the western hemisphere. Some 23,000 townsfolk were killed when a building-sized wall of mud wiped Armero from the map. I was with the first group of rescuers to reach Armero a few hours after that disaster, to find hundreds of villagers, their eyes the only white against bodies caked in dried mud, sitting on a hilltop in a daze. But the death toll this time may be higher, since Tegucigalpa and other areas of Honduras face a serious threat of epidemics.

In the centre of the devastated Honduran capital you can taste, not just smell, the stench of death, and feel like washing out your mouth when you get out. Moncada and fellow riverside residents are in no doubt of what they will find when the coffee-coloured floodwaters that still cover a swathe of the city centre finally recede. The debris - houses, bits of bridges, vehicles, trees and animals - has blocked the remaining arches of battered bridges, turning them into dikes that are holding the water inside town. The Mallot bridge, which has remained intact, is now just above the muddy surface, but on its upstream side there is a stagnant, almost solid mass of sludge, dead animals, human body parts and other sinking debris.

"When the river goes down to its normal level, you'll see a dead underwater town down there. There are thousands of bodies under there, trapped against the bridges along with houses, cars, buses," said the night-watchman, standing in the riverside gardens of the old Honduran presidential palace.



The aftermath: young boys attempt to salvage their home near Choluteca, an area in southern Honduras that was completely covered by mud and debris

YURI CORTIZAP

now a museum. We were only 50 yards from the country's parliament building and central bank, the heart of the historic old town. "There are thousands more over there," he went on, gazing over to the virtual island of Comayagua. He had seen many people around its riverside markets and seafood bars last Saturday, not wishing to abandon their property to potential looters, even in the dark small hours when

the torrent first came through. The *Death in Venice* feeling is strongest in Comayagua, where the deserted streets are now canals of brown water and sludge. Dozens of vultures attacked bloated animals as we watched. "The *zopilotes* prefer human flesh," said Moncada. "They go wild when a human body floats up." Twenty yards from this stinking carnage, people lined up to buy fresh milk and cheese from a farmer's van.

Despite the danger of cholera, malaria and dengue fever, the living have been prohibited from removing dead bodies: instead, the so-called *forenses* (state forensic doctors) are called in, eerie figures in spaceman-like suits, masks and gloves. Unidentified victims were buried in communal graves holding between five and 25 bodies each. Before a bulldozer moved in to engulf them in earth, a priest sprinkled holy water over the grave.

Looting is beginning to appear amid the carnage: immediately after nightfall on Friday, gunshots echoed around the old town and Comayagua, sending people running from the area, as policemen opened fire to warn off thieves. It was one of the reasons the government imposed a national ban on the sale of alcohol in shops, bars or hotels. "We don't have water and now they've taken away our only refuge, our *trago* [tipple]," complained one woman. Tegucigalpa remained cut off by road from the rest of the country yesterday, and all over Central America rescue workers are struggling to bring aid to victims of the catastrophe. Honduras and Nicaragua are estimated to have lost half their economic potential at a stroke: former United States president Jimmy Carter, who is visiting the region, said full recovery could take 10 to 15 years, and called for foreign debt to be cancelled.

In Guatemala, 25 cases of cholera have been reported, according to the public health ministry on Friday. In the Nicaraguan town of Posoltega, where mudslides claimed some 2,000 lives, doctors suspected a 6-year-old girl shaking with fever had contracted malaria. Dr Rigoberto Sampson dabbed Justa Pastora Povera Guillen with a wet cloth and gave her half a tablet of Tylenol. There was little he could do. "We are lacking medicine. We can't give her blood tests to see whether it's malaria, but because of the situation here, I think it is."

Among those working sleeplessly to rescue or aid victims over the past two weeks - last weekend's catastrophe was preceded by a week of torrential rain and flooding - was Peter Boden, a 51-year-old Briton who has lived for many years in San Pedro Sula, in northern Honduras. The area around the

retrotops, undiscovered and forgotten about.

"On Friday, a Honduran air force pilot came across 50 children on a tiny island of higher ground," said Mr Boden yesterday, as he organised flight after flight to try to find victims. "They'd been there without a morsel of food or a drop of water for a week. There was a woman who gave birth on one such island in the most horrible circumstances. We got her and her baby out."

"We also rescued a little girl who was half blind, with an awful skin rash and sunstroke. But I think she'll be OK. There are already some cases of cholera reported. Any day now, with the water stagnating, there'll be millions of *zancudos* [mosquitoes]. That's what happened after Fifi."

Up in the Caribbean, where Hurricane Mitch first roared through more than two weeks ago, hope was abandoned for another Briton, Guyan March, skipper of the popular tourist cruise sailing ship, the *Fantomc*, and 30 other crew members. Rescuers have given up the search for the tall-masted vessel, owned in the past by the Guinness family and Aristotle Onassis, but recently used by the Windjammer Barefoot Cruises line for holidays at sea, advertised as being less formal than on the big liners.

Captain March had dropped off his 100 passengers in Belize as Hurricane Mitch approached the Central American coast two weeks ago. He hauled out to sea, thinking it would be safer there than at anchor, which is a general rule among seamen. This time, it seems, it was the wrong move.

Leading article, page 24



INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

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The Independent and The Independent on Sunday have launched an appeal for victims of the central American disaster. Readers are asked to send donations to the Disasters Emergency Committee, which will co-ordinate the work of 15 major charities to provide food, shelter, clean water, medical aid and longer-term reconstruction aid to hundreds of communities in the region. Cheques should be made payable to "Disasters Emergency Appeal".

TODAY IN
CULTURE

History v her story

What does a historical adviser do when TV producers ignore his advice? DJ Taylor watches *Vanity Fair* with heart in mouth

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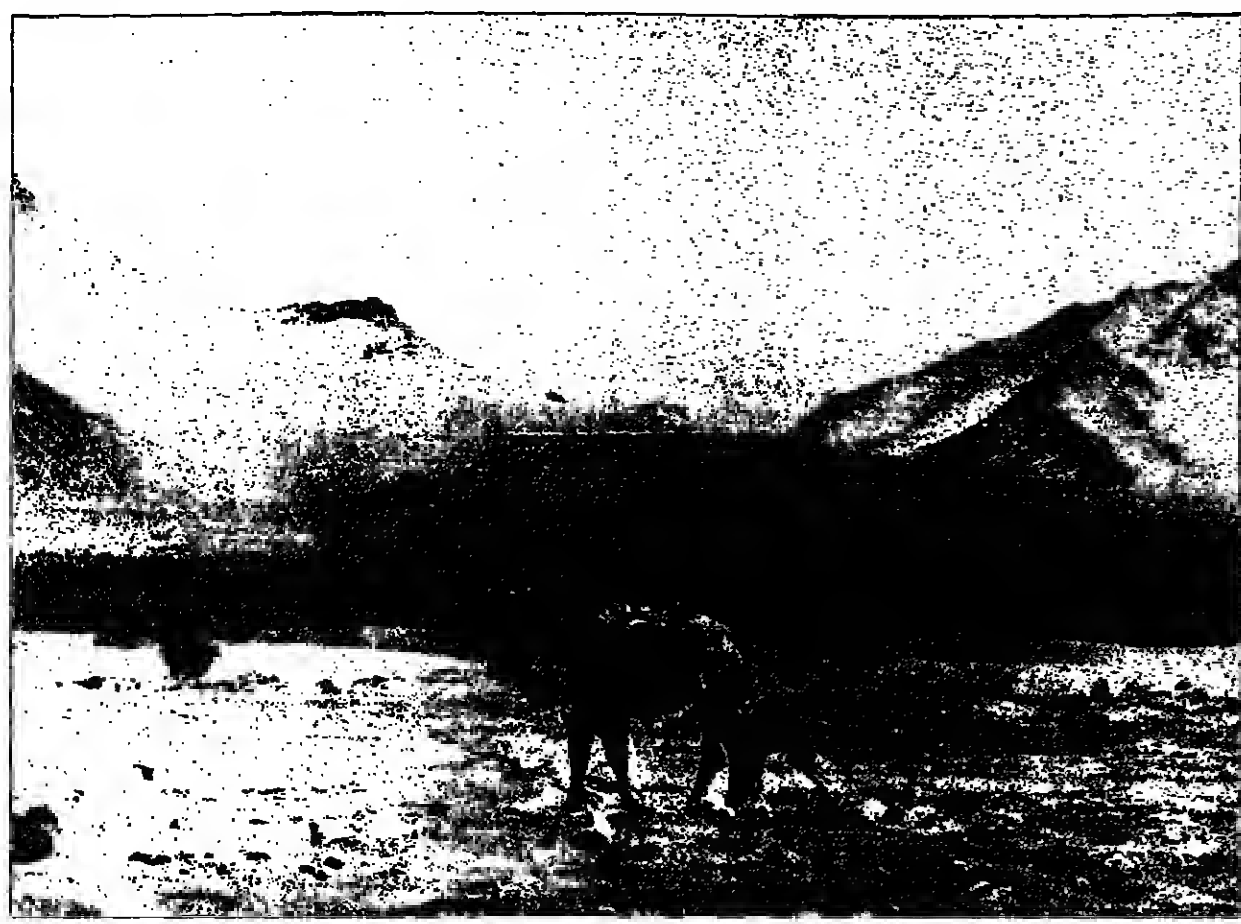
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The first-ever picture of a wild Bactrian camel with a calf, taken at the former Lop Nor test site

JOHN HARE

Former atom bomb test site becomes camel reserve

BEATING swords into ploughshares is old hat, it seems. This week there is to be an international treaty to give up atomic weapons for camels.

On Wednesday, China and the UN are to sign an agreement to turn the country's Lop Nor nuclear test site into a sanctuary for the rare Bactrian camel. The unprecedented move results from three pioneering expeditions to the desolate area north of Tibet - replete with extraordinary feats of derring-do - by a group of sexagenarian explorers.

The new nature reserve - a barren and still partially unexplored tract the size of Germany - will protect 400 wild Bactrian camels, which have survived more than 40 overhead nuclear explosions only to be threatened by hunters. It is the first ever to be set up on an atomic bomb test site.

The two-humped wild Bactrians are the last representatives of the herds from which all the world's camels are descended. The one-humped dromedaries of the Middle East are believed to have evolved from them: a one hump equips them better to withstand extreme heat.

This week's agreement largely springs from a long campaign by John Hare, a retired international civil servant from

BY GEOFFREY LEAN
Environment Correspondent



Kent, who persuaded the Chinese to allow him to be the first foreigner to enter the area for 50 years. He led three expeditions into the former test site, fighting off bandits, repairing a truck with wire from an old rocket, and twice almost being stranded hundreds of miles from the nearest villages in one of the most inhospitable places on earth.

There is no fresh water in the vast area, only salt springs. The camels have adapted to drinking salt water; they eat dry grass and tamarisks that grow around the springs. "There is nothing, no people, no fresh water, virtually no vegetation, no birds and almost no animals except the

camels," said Mr Hare. "That's why China chose it for the tests." Some 45 atmospheric explosions are thought to have been carried out before the tests went underground. Testing stopped in 1996.

Mr Hare admits to having been a "camel wallah" for 40 years, since he was the last recruit to join the British Overseas Civil Service as an administrative officer in northern Nigeria. He used camels for transport on the fringes of the Sahara, and later renewed his acquaintance with them in northern Kenya, working for the UN Environment Programme in Nairobi.

In 1995, on his first expedition, he was the first foreigner ever to cross the Gushan Gobi desert, the desolate heartland of the camel's territory, from north to south. He took the first-ever photograph of a wild Bactrian camel with a new-born calf, deep in remote sand dunes.

Between expeditions Mr Hare lobbied for a sanctuary, set up a foundation to raise money for it and published a book, *The Lost Camels of Tarary* (Little, Brown). He flies out this week to the UN Environment Programme's headquarters in Nairobi for the signing of the agreement. Reflecting on his close shaves, he said: "You are lucky to be talking to me, really."

Majorcans say no to any more tourism

SEVEN MILLION tourists come to Majorca every year, but by November the Mediterranean island is reclaimed by the 600,000 people who live here all year. On Wednesday, when up to one in 10 of the indigenous population will march through the streets of Palma to demand a halt to all further tourism development, few foreigners will be around to witness the protest.

"We want the Balearic government to stop the island being destroyed, and protect what is still left of it from speculators and developers," said Miquel Angel March, one of the organisers. "That means saying no to more hotels, no to splitting up any more large farms into building plots for holiday homes, no to the motorway planned for the south of the island, and no to more golf courses. If we carry on bringing more tourists we will be saying farewell to a whole way of life."

The Bishop of Majorca, Teodor Ubeda, has called a synod this month which will discuss environmental concerns among more traditional issues. "We have to find a way of living off tourism while respecting the environment," he said.

Although tourism is almost the only way to earn a living on Majorca, the demonstration is proving so popular that it is being supported by the church, civic groups, every opposition party, and even leading members of the ruling Partido Popular. It began as a protest against soaring land prices, ugly concrete tourist developments and environmental damage - water has to be shipped in from the Spanish mainland, and a newly built incinerator is already unable to cope with the 39,000 tonnes of refuse generated every month during the summer. But social concerns are also fuelling the protest.

It is widely believed among teachers, for example, that many secondary school students in coastal areas have discipline problems because their parents work endless shifts in the tourist industry. Some don't get a single day off all summer.

Many immigrants have settled in the Balearics to look after the tourists, reinforcing the feeling of Majorcans that their culture and identity are under threat. The Catalan language has been replaced by Spanish in coastal areas, and the local government has had to pass a law banning

FROM BEN VICKERS
in Palma, Majorca

signs and menus which are only in English or German.

Majorca has just put into effect a moratorium on new construction of tourist accommodation and curbs on rural developments. But this is not enough for Mr March. "We do not want half-hearted solutions that allow the problem to get worse," he said, pointing out that 50,000 Germans already own holiday homes on the island. Another 25,000 are thinking of buying one in the next five years. One radio station alleges that about 100 new urban developments are planned.

Majorca is beginning to share its experiences with other Mediterranean islands swamped by tourism. Carlos Manera, professor of economic history at the University of the Balearic Islands, attended a meeting in Sardinia last month which also attracted specialists from Sicily, Corsica, Cyprus and Malta, which together receive at least 10 million tourists a year.

"We need to define indicators of growth which will show when development is going the wrong way or too far," he said. "The classic indicators of economic health will have to be supplemented by factors such as the high rate of heart disease, the increasing percentage of salaries spent on the purchase of homes and the low number of university-level students on the islands." A centre for island studies is being planned for the Balearics.

According to Prof Manera, the plight of island societies can largely be solved by developing a more diversified economy. The Balearic government is promoting high-tech service industry, and has signed up Richard Rogers to design a cutting-edge residential and industrial complex called ParcBit, but smaller initiatives include the Insula scheme on Sardinia, which encourages tourists to buy locally produced souvenirs.

"Co-ordination between the islands," said Prof Manera, "will help find solutions to the drain on resources which tourism is proving to be. The islands have never had much contact. We hope to break this isolation and work together on these problems."



1938



1968



Magaluf: enough is enough

PEOPLE IN PICTURES

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John Hare 1950



It air: deregulation means longer trips for passengers like these at Philadelphia International Airport

EDDY BALLMOLAP

Airline is lone star of American skies

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY in Washington

AIR PASSENGERS in the New York area last week had some good news with the report that Southwest Airlines, the biggest low-fare carrier in the United States, would start flying to MacArthur airport on Long Island next spring.

Assuming the plan stays on course, although Southwest will not confirm it, this will be the first time a big cut-price airline will have penetrated the New York metropolitan area, the world's biggest air-passenger market. The arrival of Southwest could cut domestic air fares to and from New York by as much as two-thirds - with the average one-way ticket price to Washington DC dropping from \$200 to around \$70.

Until now, the Washington-Boston east-coast corridor, with New York at its centre, has remained stubbornly impervious

to the projected benefits of airline deregulation: more flights and cheaper fares.

But the manner of Southwest's incursion is instructive. Its first months will be a big test of whether airline deregulation, as it has evolved in the US, benefits air passengers, or simply helps the biggest companies increase market dominance and profits.

As in the few big urban centres where it has a presence, Southwest has sought a base outside the main, favoured airports. The newly upgraded MacArthur airport is about 40 miles east of New York City's most central airport, La Guardia, so passengers face long road and rail journeys to the city. But the missionaries of

deregulation at Southwest deny they are shut out of the more convenient locations.

The company's spokesman, Ed Stewart, said Southwest had a policy of seeking airports where traffic was light so delays did not affect their efficient operations, a factor in keeping prices low. The company did not want to fly to the busy airports of La Guardia or National in Washington DC, he said.

Other small airlines have complained that they were prevented from using big airports, but Mr Stewart is positive about industry deregulation. "If there had not been deregulation, we would never have gone outside the state of Texas," he said. Deregulation meant Southwest could "decide to fly to whatever state we want, when we want, at whatever price we care to set". The rest was up to the market.

Mr Stewart said the company could pick and choose from 160 airports which were clamouring for its business, and aimed to start operations at one or two new airports a year.

But there are two reasons why so many airports are crying out for Southwest, or a company like it, for American-style deregulation has not been kind to everyone. Many passengers have seen their services cut or their ticket prices drastically increased as competitors are driven out or persuaded to share the market.

They have also seen the evolution of price structures which favour long advance booking over last-minute travel, penalising not just business travellers but those flying because of family emergencies.

Deregulation may have given Southwest the freedom of the US skies, but it is unique. It is a young company with a

new fleet of aircraft and maintenance is simplified because the aircraft are from one manufacturer.

Southwest works out of airports with cheaper fees, to lower profit margins, and can afford to undercut the ticket prices of older, less streamlined carriers. But it has competed by negotiating its way around the big boys, rarely by competing head on. Small airlines that have tried to compete on lower fares have found themselves bought up or squeezed into oblivion.

And the big companies, such as United, American Airlines or USAir, have powerful means at their disposal, starting from the provision of information and the hub-and-spoke system of routes that has developed with deregulation.

Finding objective information about who flies where, when and for how much is an enterprise which could tie up a would-be passenger for hours. Information from travel agents may be influenced by bonuses from carriers, and the services of Southwest and other cheaper companies may not be included on the main internet travel databases.

The hub system reinforces the information bias. The big airlines increasingly have terminals that dispense and display only their flight information. At Atlanta, you are likely to find yourself in a virtual "Delta world", in Miami, it is all American Airlines.

For passengers, whose end destination is not a hub, it necessitates transfers where none had been needed before, extending the length of a journey by several hours. The tendency for one airline to dominate its hub has resulted in monopolies or cartels, which guarantee profits for the dominant airlines and high ticket prices for passengers.

ABC pulls plug on Oliver Stone

FROM ANDREW GUMBEL in Los Angeles

YOU CAN always count on Oliver Stone for a good conspiracy theory. That is what the executives at ABC television thought, anyway, when they commissioned him to make a documentary special about the downing of TWA Flight 800 - the jet that exploded over Long Island in the middle of the 1996 Olympic Games.

In one way, their instinct was spot-on: sure enough, the man who revived all the old theories about the Kennedy assassination in his film *JFK* didn't buy the official version - that the Boeing aircraft broke up as a result of an explosion in a fuel tank. Mr Stone believed that a US Navy missile downed the plane, and the subsequent federal investigation was a smoke-screen to cover up the military's deep embarrassment.

The documentary was duly made, but there was one little problem: nobody at ABC believed a word of it. Furthermore, the FBI were furious about the film's existence, and the victims' families made clear the documentary was one more trauma they could do without.

So, at the end of last week, ABC risked giving even more grist to the conspiracy theorists' mill by pulling the documentary off the air. Not only did they say they were not comfortable with Mr Stone's conclusions, they made it clear they had always viewed his work as "entertainment" rather than serious journalism. "Television viewers could find it difficult to distinguish between the two forms, and we decided not to continue development on this project," the network said in a statement.

The controversy over Flight 800 has raged almost from the

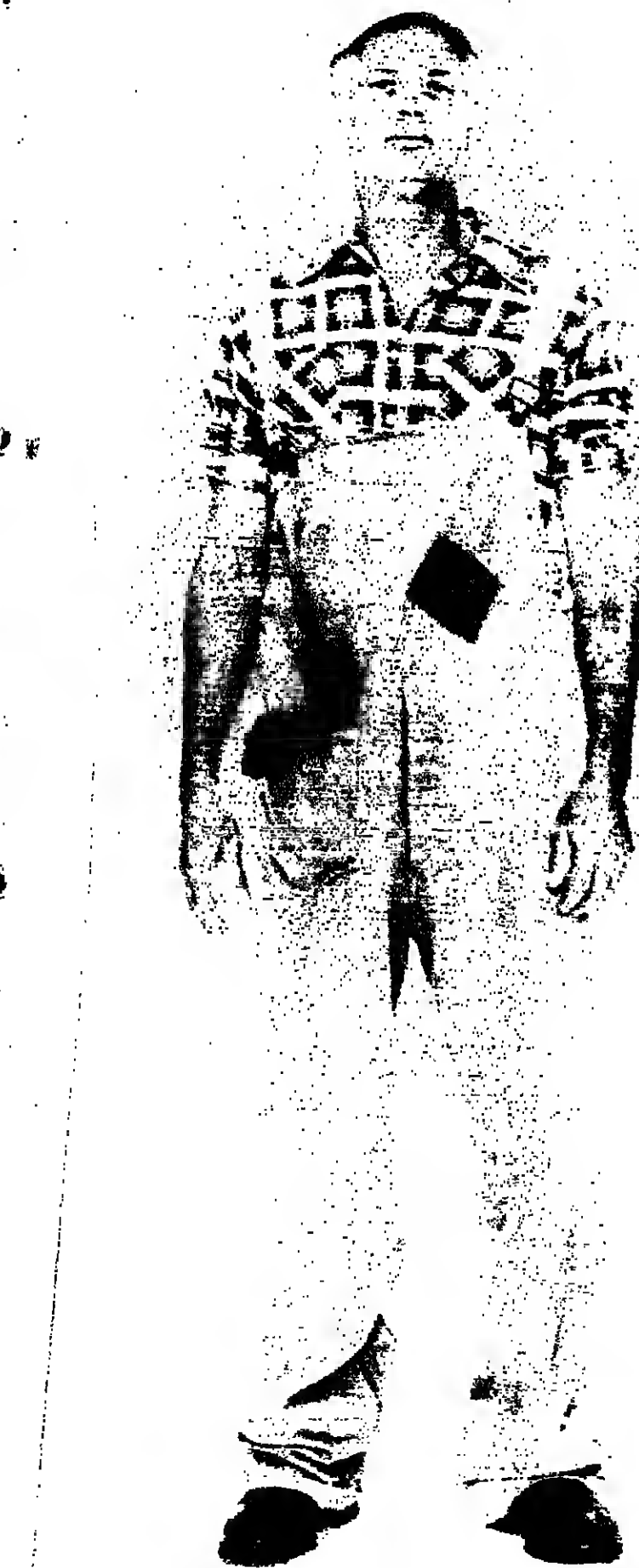
moment it fell out of the sky two and a half years ago, killing all 230 people on board.

The missile theory was given enormous credence at first, because of jitters about terrorism at the start of the Atlanta Olympics and because of circumstantial evidence picked up in initial news reports. Eyewitnesses said they saw streaks of light shooting up into the sky moments before the explosion. It emerged that a military sea and air exercise was underway nearby. Was it an audacious terrorist attack? Or a regrettable instance of friendly fire?

The partial conclusion of the FBI and the National Transportation Safety Board was nothing so sensational. The 25-year-old plane, on its way from New York to Paris, had succumbed to an explosion in a fuel tank caused by volatile fuel vapours. The FBI dropped the case on the grounds that no crime appears to have been committed.

The missile theory was almost entirely discredited four months after the crash, when Pierre Salinger, erstwhile spokesman for President Kennedy, claimed he was in possession of government documents "proving" there had been a cover-up. The documents turned out to be a hoax circulating on the internet.

A clutch of former military officers have remained attached to the missile theory, and even paid for a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* a few weeks ago to publicise their views. None had any immediate comment on ABC's decision to cancel the documentary.



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TRAVEL

Return to the Somme

For Remembrance Sunday, Jeff Howell visits the First World War battlefields and cemeteries of northern France

IN GREENWICH, Connecticut, it has long been bad form to mention the name Moxley. This is well-to-do, USA, a seashore idyll of country clubs and mansions favoured by the well-heeled and the famous. But Moxley is a like a family secret that refuses to stay hidden and is casting its shadow once more.

It happened on Halloween night 23 years ago. Fifteen-year-old Martha Moxley had left her home in Belle Haven, one of the best addresses in Greenwich, to play tricks with some friends. But she never returned. Her badly battered body was found under an old fir in the family garden the next day.

What befell Martha was never in doubt. She had been bludgeoned and stabbed with the shaft of a six-iron golf club, sections of which remained on

Hallowe'en murder haunts Kennedys

The unsolved killing of a teenager 23 years ago threatens to add another stain to the family's reputation. David Osborne reports

the scene. But, beyond that, there was nothing. Amid whispers of bungling if not actual evidence suppression, the police department failed to solve the murder. No trial has been held and no charges brought.

Spurred by two books about the case published this spring, one by Mark Fuhrman, the detective made notorious for his racism in the O J Simpson murder trial, state prosecutors have reopened the case, convening a grand jury in nearby Bridgeport. For weeks, the jury, consisting of a single judge,

has been issuing serial subpoenas to compel anyone possibly tied to the murder to testify.

If and when charges are finally filed, the murder that Greenwich would rather forget is likely to burst, meteor-like, back into American consciousness. It is not just the high-society setting that will draw attention, or even the involvement of Mr Fuhrman. It is the identity – and the breeding – of the two individuals, who, according to press leaks, have surfaced as principal suspects. They are Michael and

Thomas Skakel, brothers who were among those who went out with Martha that night and who were identified even then as the last people to see her alive. Thomas and Michael, then 17 and 15 years old, lived across the road from the Moxleys, the sons of Rushton Skakel, a wealthy and respected industrialist. But something else distinguishes the family: they are part of the Kennedy clan.

Rushton Skakel, who is now 74 and lives in Florida, is the brother of Ethel Kennedy, widow of Robert F Kennedy.

Thomas and Michael, therefore, are the late senator's nephews, a link which reinforced gossip that the boys were investigated with kid gloves. "I think they got deferential or preferential treatment," John Moxley, Martha's brother, said. "The Kennedy thing probably played a part."

Suspicion fell on the Skakel boys from the start. The golf club was matched to one that had belonged to the family. At first, Thomas came in for the closest scrutiny. He told the police he had left Martha outside his own house at 9.30pm, and had gone

to the home of a cousin. He took a lie detector test that was reportedly inconclusive.

But in his book, *Murder in Greenwich*, Mr Fuhrman points the finger instead at Michael. Accusing the town police of hopeless sleuthing, he says that a critical item of evidence, the grip of the club, was embedded in the skull of Martha when her body was found, but then was lost or mislaid by detectives.

Indeed, it is on Michael that the closed-door grand jury is now said to be concentrating. As a child, it has been reported, he

took pleasure in decapitating small rodents – with a golf iron. Critically, he is said to have confessed to the murder during a therapy session at a drug treatment centre in the late 1980s. Former workers from the centre testified to the jury last week.

"There is a powerful case there," said Wendy Murphy, a former prosecutor and legal commentator. "The problem, though, will be figuring out which of the two brothers did it. Have you solved the case because you've narrowed it to two suspects? Probably not."

The brothers, both married and living in Massachusetts, have always professed their innocence. Michael assisted Senator Edward Kennedy in his 1994 re-election and worked for the late Michael Kennedy at the Citizen's Energy Corporation in Boston. Recently, Robert Kennedy Jr, their cousin, came to their defence. "Those boys had nothing to do with the tragic murder of Martha Moxley. Their lives have been absolutely beleaguered by innuendo that has hounded them for 22 years."

The work of the grand jury threatens to add another stain to America's most famous – and famously troubled – political dynasty. But for Martha's mother, Dorothy, it promises relief. "I am like having an open wound and no hope to close it." The closure may, at last, be in sight.

US right in turmoil after Newt quits

THE DEMOCRATS in Washington will have woken yesterday morning and pinched themselves. Was it all just a dream? Or did their Republican adversaries really toss their leader overboard after an election rout?

It was reality, not fantasy. For four years the Republicans followed Newt Gingrich, the silver-haired revolutionary, on his self-imposed crusade to shake up American government. That crusade ended suddenly on Friday night with his resignation.

Suddenly, everything is up for grabs in American politics, and the Republican party risks a civil war. And that is bad news for those who seek the party's nomination for the Presidential race in 2000.

It may yet remove the boyish grin from George W Bush, whose smile made him the acceptable face of the Republican party in a week when there were precious few things to smile about. The Bush brothers, George W and Jeb, emerged as the new role models for the party in the elections, by sweeping all before them in Texas and Florida respectively while the Republicans crashed and burned elsewhere. They are both conservatives, but cuddly conservatives, more interested in practical politics than ideology. George W is easily the front runner in the nomination stakes, and exit polls show him beating Al Gore, Vice President and the likely Democratic

FROM ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

choice, hands down. The party – keen to put on a friendly face again – was moving yesterday to elevate him further. A group of Republican activists was meeting in Iowa to decide on their candidate for 2000. Iowa leads off the primary season, and an endorsement here would give him considerable momentum.

So what could derail him? The Republican party itself, that's what. As Mr Gingrich's resignation showed, it is developing a taste for self-mutilation. His departure may have come as a total shock, but pressure had been building for months, and dissatisfaction stemmed partly from events that go back to 1995, the year he arrived as Speaker. Mr Gingrich was seen as having bungled a budget showdown with the White House, and repeated the mistake this year. The moderates in the party saw him as too ideological, too obsessed with himself, and more of a bomb-thrower than a party boss.

But Mr Gingrich made clear that his real problems lie with the party's conservatives. In the conference call with Republicans where he announced his intention to resign, Mr Gingrich lashed out at them in no uncertain terms. "A handful of members have blackmailed the conference," he said, according to one Republican quoted in

the *New York Times*. The Speaker had also called them "hateful" and "cannibals".

"Look, I'm the speaker, so I'll take responsibility," Mr Gingrich had said after the election defeat. But he warned those who were circling around his leadership to back off. "I think the people who normally are quoted in this are people who would in fact take the party to a narrower base with fewer members."

It was from the Christian fundamentalist wing of the party that the real venom came after the elections. "When the team is losing you get a new coach," James Dobson, the eminence grise of the new Christian conservative movement, said after the election. "They lost their nerve at the end of the session," he said of the party leadership. "They caved in on everything of importance to the pro-family and pro-life community." Mr Dobson has been saying for months that the Republicans were failing to make a mark, because they did not connect with the wishes of Christian fundamentalists, and earlier this year threatened to pull his group away from the Republicans.

Some conservative Christians, it emerges, had made that decision for themselves, with a significant proportion defecting to vote for conservative Democrats. If the Republicans in general had a bad time at the polls on Tuesday, the religious right had a wretched election,



Former Speaker Newt Gingrich and his wife Marianne leave his office in Marietta, Georgia

DAVID J. PHILLIPS

perhaps the worst since it emerged as a force in 1980. The Christian Coalition spent \$1.3m, and the Campaign for Working Families, which is allied to Mr Dobson, spent nearly \$3m, yet many of their candidates failed to get in.

The diagnosis of what went wrong varies sharply across the party. Randy Tate, the Christian Coalition Executive Director, said the Republicans failed to offer a "clear conservative agenda". But the moderates believe it is precisely the dom-

ination of the religious right that is hampering them. "When Republicans try to tell the American people what they should think about someone else's morality, we get thumped," said Mark Miller, head of the Republican Leadership Council.

The activists meeting in Iowa to support Mr Bush will be drawn largely from the conservative right, and they will want him to demonstrate his conservative credentials. That risks pushing him further to the

right than the electorate may like.

But an endorsement now poses other dangers. There are plenty of candidates who will try to outflank him on the right, notably Steve Forbes, the millionaire publisher who has spent the years since his defeat for the candidacy in 1996 burnishing his conservative credentials. Mr Bush had said he wanted to make a decision about standing for the Presidency only next year. Partly that is because he has, after all, only

just been re-elected Governor of Texas. But he and his advisers also know that there is a serious risk that by being out in front so early, Mr Bush simply becomes an easier target for the right at a time when the party's schisms are opening up.

Conservatives are a small but important part of the electorate. Fifty per cent of this year's voters said they considered themselves moderates, up about five per cent, and they wanted to vote on issues like education and social security.

Conservatives – who make up about a third of the electorate, down five per cent – put moral values at the top of their list of concerns.

But they loom much larger in the Republican Party, where they are a crucial element amongst the party's activists, and – individually and through political action committees – they can deliver vast amounts of money. They did for Mr Gingrich. And if Mr Bush does not demonstrate some fancy footwork, they could do for him too.

Japanese shun the gift voucher solution to economic woes

"JAPANESE POLITICS has sunk very low," said Hirokazu Mizoguchi, vice president of the Japan Association of Corporate Executives last week. "It is complete nonsense," agreed his colleague Yoshihiko Mitsuuchi, "and we should resist immediately from something so cartoon-like." Leading politicians have called it "idiotic", and it makes shopkeepers frown. It is the latest hope for saving Japan's shrinking economy: the gift voucher.

The idea, under serious consideration by the Japanese government, is to tackle head-on one of the biggest problems facing the country as it slides into its worst recession since the war – the reluctance of its once confident consumers to spend their considerable wealth. Despite the shocks which have befallen

FROM RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Tokyo

their once mighty banks and the near collapse of some of their Asian neighbours, Japanese are still among the world's richest people. But, fearful of redundancy and unemployment, Japanese families are holding on to their money in banks, savings accounts and – sometimes literally – under the bed.

In the first six months of this year, spending decreased by six per cent and those cathedrals of conspicuous consumption, Japan's department stores, have become sepulchres as spending has slowed by 15 per cent. All this creates a vicious circle: with so little demand from consumers, manufacturers and retailers have been hit hard, increasing the like-

lihood of lay offs and bankruptcies and creating an atmosphere of even greater caution and trepidation.

The government has tried repeatedly to part people from their yen, but with negligible effect. Bank interest rates have been reduced to nearly zero to discourage saving – but last week some treasury bill yields actually fell below zero for a while, which meant investors were prepared to pay the authorities to keep their money.

The government has passed the so-called "Happy Monday" bill, intended to encourage spending by creating new three-day Bank Holiday weekends. Tax breaks have been announced, and trillions of yen have been spent on the construction of unneeded roads, bridges and dams in the hope that money will trickle

down through local communities and refresh the national economy. But the money liberated by these exercises remains unspent.

In August, the disposable income of Japanese households actually went up by three per cent, but consumption went down by two per cent, the 10th consecutive monthly decline.

In his "General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money", J M Keynes pointed out that the way to encourage spending is to create a form of money which "goes bad... like green cheese" – and this is the idea behind the voucher scheme. Instead of tax breaks, the idea goes, Japanese will be presented with shopping coupons worth, for example, 30,000 yen (£154). They will not be redeemable for cash and, like Stilton on the shelf at Sainsbury's,

they will have an expiry date, thus catapulting families back into the stores and setting the tills ringing.

The vouchers are expected to be unveiled in a week's time as part of a new spending package currently being worked out by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). But since the idea was floated last month no one seems to have had a good word for it. Detractors point out the administrative effort and security problems involved in creating what is, in effect, a new kind of legal tender. Vouchers could be forged and a black market might spring up. Even more likely is that people will take the vouchers and spend them, but save the money which they would otherwise have spent as cash, thus neutralising any benefit to the economy. The Japan

Chamber of Commerce found that fewer than a third of companies surveyed thought the voucher scheme was a good idea and 16 per cent believed that it would have negative effects in the long run.

The scheme's ultimate doom may lie in an amendment being favoured by the LDP. Komeito, the opposition party which originally proposed it, intended that the vouchers should be given to everyone; the LDP prefers to target only low-income families. But even – or perhaps especially – in the present recessionary times, that is a label that few Japanese would willingly attach to themselves. "So people won't want to use it," said a spokesperson for the Japan Consumers' Association. "They don't want the stigma of being associated with poverty."



The Japanese: spending down

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Last days for China's forgotten Jews

FROM TERESA POOLE
in Peking

OVER DINNER in the central Chinese city of Kaifeng, 68-year-old Zhao Xiangru put down his chopsticks. "I was born in Kaifeng in 1930," he said. "My ancestors were Jewish. I have got Jewish blood. All of this was given by God, it is not a personal choice. I feel proud that I am a Jew." Conspicuously absent from the table, given that this was China, was any pork.

The existence of mainland Chinese who claim to be of Jewish descent is one of China's more curious historical legacies. Sometime during the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1126AD), about 500 Jewish Silk Road merchants decided to settle in Kaifeng, the splendid imperial capital with a flourishing population of one million. The Jews were probably from Persia, but scholars are not certain. They were welcomed by the Emperor, built Kaifeng's first synagogue in 1163, and were known in Chinese as "the sect which plucks out the sinews".

Over several centuries they maintained Jewish traditions and religious rituals, including circumcising boys and abstaining from pork. An early Ming dynasty (1368-1644) emperor specified seven surnames for the Jews of Kaifeng: Ai, Lao, Zhao, Zheng, Shi, Jin and Li. But assimilation into the Chinese community and inter-marriage took its toll on the Jewish identity. The last Rabbi died in about 1800, and by 1860 the synagogue had fallen into disrepair and disuse. It was demolished, and in 1912 the plot was sold to Canadian missionaries. On the site now stands the No. 4 People's Hospital. To this day, however, there are those in Kaifeng who claim their Jewish ancestry keenly - if not always fruitfully.

Some have tried, and failed, to seek recognition from Peking for China's Jews to be classified as a national ethnic minority. Others have attempted, also unsuccessfully, to attract international Jewish and Israeli investment to Kaifeng. Several



Memories are fading in South Teaching Scripture Lane, in the old Jewish quarter of Kaifeng. Right: a Chinese artist's drawing of life as it was



TERESA POOLE

have been turned down for emigration to Israel, where Kaifeng's descendants are not recognised as Jewish because in China the religion was passed down through the father, not matrilineally.

Xu Xin, China's only Professor of Jewish Studies, estimates that there are 500 to 1,000 people in Kaifeng who are descendants of the old Jewish community. They have little contact with each other, and few are as committed as Mr Zhao. Knowledge of Hebrew and the religious texts is long dead, and the avoidance of pork is really the only enduring custom. But a few elderly descendants, like Mr Zhao, still recall distant memories of Jewish home life. Mr Zhao remembers celebrating Passover, Yom Kippur, and other Jewish holidays as a child. "From my earliest memory, there was no pork in the family." A record of the family's 14 generations, written in Hebrew and Chinese, was taken by the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution, he said.

Dr Wendy Abraham, an American Sinologist who has researched Kaifeng's Jewish history, interviewed elderly Kaifeng descendants in the

1980s. Shi Zhongyu, then 66, told her he remembered seeing brass Stars of David wrapped in red silk hidden in a medicine chest, and the preparation of cakes containing no yeast.

Few signs are left of Kaifeng's Jewish ancestry. In the floor of the hospital boilerhouse is a carved round flag-

stone, the lid of the old synagogue's well. Two nearby lanes are still called North and South Teaching the Scripture Lane, but the last Jew in this old quarter died years ago.

Climb to the top floor of the city's decrepit museum and there is a low-lit "Exhibition on the History and Culture of

Ancient Kaifeng Jews", normally kept locked. Here are the most important exhibits: two inscribed stelae from the old synagogue, 1489 and 1512. The latter reads in part: "The founder of this religion is Abraham... After him Moses, who transmitted the scriptures..." A stone basin from the syna-

agogue, and reproductions of documents now outside China, complete the small exhibit. The museum's curator, Mo Huomin, said: "Ordinary Chinese people are not interested, but we open for visitors, experts and foreign groups. Very few Kaifeng Jewish descendants come here. Since these stelae

have existed for many years, they all know about them."

Kaifeng's sensitive authorities are uncertain how to handle the city's unique Jewish history. "In the last few years," said Mr Xu, "there were a few people in Kaifeng who marked their Chinese ID cards as 'Jewish' [Chinese for Jewish]. Unfortunately,

I heard that last year the Public Security Bureau asked them to change 'Jewish' to something else." When the *Independent on Sunday* applied to the government authorities to meet some of the Kaifeng Jewish descendants, officials declined to help. Jewish proselytisers are certainly not welcome.

Perhaps attitudes would change if Kaifeng's Jewish history proved more profitable. Since 1993 there have been attempts to encourage Jewish investment in Kaifeng, but all have come to nothing. Neither Kaifeng's mere 650,000 population, nor its ageing chemical, textile and machine industries, make it an obvious choice for foreign investment.

Tourism, aimed at Western Jews, seems the most obvious area to promote, but Xia Feng, of Kaifeng's tourism bureau, said there were no plans to encourage this. There is little to see. Dr Abraham runs "Jewish Historical Tours of China" which last month brought its fourth tour group of Americans to Kaifeng. The highlight of any such tour is, of course, the chance to meet some Jewish descendants with memories from the 1930s. But even this attraction will soon die out.



FLAT EARTH

Spoiling to win

EVERYBODY made a fuss last week of Jesse "The Body" Ventura, the former professional wrestler who sneaked up behind the main party candidates to be elected governor of Minnesota. But Flat Earth wishes to salute someone else. Our hero is not so much a Goliath as a David - an unassuming Mr Nice Guy from Seattle who might just have turned the whole electoral race around.

Until the final weeks of the campaign, Jay Inslee looked like yet another Democrat on route to a pounding at the hands of the seemingly unstoppable Republican majority in Congress. But then he had the courage - many called it temerity - to raise the Lewinsky scandal in his television ads, attacking his Republican opponent for Washington's First Congressional District, Rick White, hijacking the real political agenda to pursue a partisan anti-gay hunt against Bill Clinton. Mr Inslee's initiative may as well have prompted the Republicans' own 11th-hour one-campaign on the Lewinsky scandal - a tactic now universally acknowledged as disastrous.

For Mr Inslee, he knocked Mr White by a comfortable 42 per cent margin.

Dirty trick

HOW would you like it if, whenever you went to the pub, the shops, people asked: "Have you washed your hands?" This happened to a 42-year-old man from Munich in Germany, who just remains nameless to spare him further humiliation, after unwittingly arriving in a programme titled *Are Men Pigs?* He was caught dry-handed his way out of the lavatory a motorway service station, in full view of a camera hidden in the fittings. He reached for the door, a sign flashed up: "Have you forgotten to wash your hands?" There was no need for an answer. His disgusting position had been recorded and played to millions of approving viewers. The victim had had the last laugh. He sued the RTL



Clean-up later in the courts

television company for injuring his dignity, and won DM18,000 (about £3,000) in damages. The station has been banned from airing the incriminating sequence ever again.

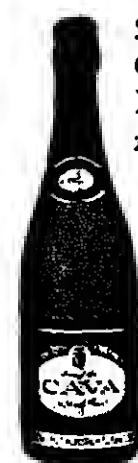
There's the rub

THE transition from communist stagnation to semi-capitalist chaos in Russia has had some weird results, such as military personnel producing pornographic videos instead of televisions equipment and factory workers being paid in toilet seats and tinned pineapple chunks rather than cash, which their bosses didn't have.

Now someone has drawn my attention to the factory in Volgograd which used to produce high-precision navigation equipment for the navy before diversifying into consumer products, including rubber dildoes. Utterly characteristically, plans to make them electric had to be shelved for lack of development funds. "They're hand-operated," said the plant's union leader.

You can guess the rest. Workers found themselves having to hawk the product round Volgograd's sex shops, but potential clients were unimpressed. "They're primitive," said one sex shop owner. "The more expensive ones with more features sell better. People don't look for price. They look for quality." Russians may not always have got the hang of the producing side of capitalism, but as consumers they're the same as the rest of us.

Raymond Whitaker



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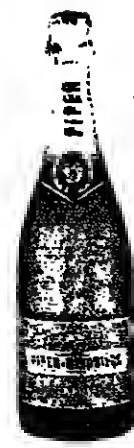
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Is Dr Münch a confused old man or a defiant Nazi?



Dr Münch: human experiments

VISITORS come from afar to retired GP Hans Münch's little house in the Bavarian Alps to hear stories about the war, Auschwitz, and his good friend Josef Mengele. For 50 years he has told of his gruesome experiments on inmates, the technology of crematoria, and his profound admiration for the evil scientist known to posterity as the "Angel of Death".

"Mengele and the others sent us their material: heads, livers, spinal fluid, whatever came up," the 87-year-old doctor recently told *Der Spiegel* magazine. "We analysed it." Dr Münch went on to praise the advantages of gassing the inmates, spoke about the "servility" of Jews, and described at length the "ideal working conditions" at the Hygiene Institute he ran near the Auschwitz concentration camp: "I was able to conduct

FROM IMRE KARACS
in Bonn

experiments on humans, that are otherwise only possible on rabbits. That was important work for science." Part of this "important work" involved infecting prisoners with malaria.

Since this appalling testimony appeared, the village of Rosshaupten has been flooded with visitors. The street in front of his house is clogged with TV crews. Anti-Nazi activists hurl bricks and abuse, there has been an attempted break-in and the telephone has been disconnected because of the abusive calls and death threats. War crimes prosecutors in Frankfurt have opened an investigation. Germans ask: how has this monster escaped punishment? Well, after a trial by a Polish court,

Dr Münch was acquitted of war crimes. The other 39 Auschwitz doctors were all convicted; 23 were sentenced to death. Dr Münch was set free because 19 former inmates testified to his innocence. That, according to *Der Spiegel*, was the beginning of the "myth of the good man of Auschwitz".

Dr Münch had refused to take part in the "selections" — the process whereby "superfluous" inmates were condemned to the gas chamber. There was nothing heroic about that. At his trial in Krakow the prosecutor asked him: "Can one conclude that every other doctor could have arranged not to participate in the selections?" — "I think that was possible," came the laconic reply. Still, in the eyes of many of his victims, he was a good man. "Münch

was humane to us, and in Auschwitz, in these terrible conditions, that meant a lot," a former inmate remembered in a German television documentary 17 years ago.

A member of the SS and volunteer for Auschwitz, Dr Münch has been racked by guilt ever since. He has tried to make amends by giving testimony on the Nazi crimes, to courts, to reporters, to anyone who cares to listen. Telling the story of Auschwitz is his personal purgatory, and so it should be.

But suddenly the plot has changed. In the *Spiegel* interview, readers are confronted by a callously unrepentant Nazi, boasting of his crimes. The media are lapping it up. And, as every editor knows, Nazis sell.

But there is one fact *Der Spiegel* and the other amateur Nazi-hunters

omit as they demolish the "myth". As Dr Münch's daughter Ruti puts it: "My father has no short-term memory." Less politely, he is senile.

Paul Moor, who made that documentary 17 years ago, has reached the same conclusion after talking to Dr Münch in recent weeks. "Dr Münch is nearly 88. He's no longer *compens mentis*." The producer of a camera team just back from Rosshaupten reports that he is completely unaware of the outrage he has caused.

What he may or may not have said to *Der Spiegel* must remain a matter of conjecture. But there is no mystery about why Dr Münch makes Germans uncomfortable. If even an SS officer in Auschwitz could refuse certain unpardonable orders with impunity, it destroys another myth: that resistance to the Nazis was futile.

Peace rocked by bungled bomb

FROM PATRICK COCKBURN in Jerusalem

IT WAS not a competent attack. Black smoke billowing from a red Fiat first alerted stall-holders in the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem that they were once again the target of suicide bombers.

Some immediately fled to safety. Others were slower to realise the danger. Sigal, an Israeli woman running to catch a bus outside the market, said: "I heard a boom and smoke came out of the car. I asked a woman what somebody was doing with a car which didn't work." Then there was second explosion, and Sigal fled screaming.

Earlier that morning Yusuf Zughayr, an 18-year-old Palestinian from Anata refugee camp north of Jerusalem, had helped to place two suitcases in the car. Israeli and Palestinian police say that he and an unnamed companion belonged to Islamic Jihad, the militant Palestinian organisation, and were aiming to repeat last year's suicide bombing in the market which killed 15 Israelis.

As the two men drove up Jaffa road, the main thoroughfare in central Jerusalem,

something went wrong. A senior Israeli police officer later said: "It was an amateur bomb." A premature explosion killed Mr Zughayr and his fellow bomber before they could enter the market. The blast tore apart their Fiat, hurling a large piece of metal to the other side of the road.

Within minutes of the attack Jews from Mea Sharim, an ultra-orthodox neighbourhood nearby, were crowding the balconies to look at the bodies of the dead bombers. Finally, a policeman threw sheets over them.

Even by the dire standards of suicide bombing in this part of the world, the operation was bungled. No Israelis were killed, and only one was seriously injured. The force of the explosion went mainly upwards, damaging the roof of the covered market, but leaving food on nearby stalls undamaged.

But politically Mr Zughayr and his companion did not die in vain. If their aim was to ensure that the so-called "land-for-security" deal agreed be-

tween Israel and the Palestinians at the Wye Plantation in Maryland last month is still-born, then they have come close to achieving their aim.

On receiving news of the attack Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, immediately adjourned the cabinet meeting called to ratify the deal reached at Wye. A statement said it would resume discussion only when Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, proved he was "fighting an all-out war against terror". From members of the cabinet whose opposition to Wye was already known, there was an almost audible sigh of relief that they had an excuse not to start the limited Israeli withdrawal.

The effectiveness of the latest suicide bombing is all the greater because it took place at the end of a week when it began to look as if Mr Netanyahu did not want to implement the deal he signed in the US. "He keeps staring wistfully at the safe shore of the ideological right that he deserted," writes

Hemi Shalev, the Israeli commentator. "He keeps acting like the old Bibi, who is good for the Jews, attacks the leftists, quarrels with the Palestinians and makes the Americans go out of their minds."

Mr Netanyahu demanded that two issues be settled before he even allowed his cabinet to discuss ratification. He wanted a written timetable for the arrest of 30 Palestinian suspects living in areas controlled by Mr Arafat, and revocation of the Palestinian charter by a fully convened Palestine National Council.

Neither reason was very substantive. He already had a verbal agreement on the Palestinians' arrests, two of whom are reportedly dead and others have little evidence against them. The US and the previous Israeli government agreed in 1996 that the Palestine National Council had revoked clauses in the charter to which it objected.

The problem for Mr Netanyahu is that there is no real centre to Israeli politics. He could abandon the hard right and the Jewish settlers in the West



Mohammed Zughayr with a photo of his dead son, suicide bomber and Islamic Jihad member Yusuf

RUTH FRISCHMAN

Bank without making any new friends with more moderate views. In Israel, differences between right and left are reinforced by divisions between both secular and religious Jews and different ethnic communities. By going ahead with Wye, Mr Netanyahu would split the coalition which elected him.

It is also difficult for the Israeli leader to sit still. In the talks in the US he came under real pressure for the first time from President Bill Clinton,

which took him by surprise. Mr Netanyahu may have gone to Wye only because he thought Mr Clinton was weakened by scandal, but he discovered the President was on the rebound. The success of the Democrats in the mid-term elections puts the White House in a stronger position to pressurise Israel in the run-up to Mr Clinton's address to the Palestinian National Council next month.

The Wye agreement is in trouble on another front. Tsahi

Hanebi, Israel's Justice Minister, says Mr Zughayr belonged to Islamic Jihad, a largely moribund but militant organisation. Palestinian security confirmed this. But Hamas, which claimed responsibility for the previous suicide bombing, on an Israeli school bus in the Gaza strip, claimed responsibility for the latest explosion.

Clearly, however, a new suicide bombing campaign is under way. Given that the targets are schoolchildren and shoppers, at

some point in the future there are bound to be heavy casualties.

There is a community of interests between the Palestinian militant organisations and the Israeli right. Even a botched suicide bombing has a serious political impact, because the right will use it to discredit the idea of an agreement between Israel and Mr Arafat, an objective shared by Hamas and Islamic Jihad. It is this which makes it inevitable that there will be more suicide attacks.

Britain cautious about attacks on Iraq

BRITAIN, which is sending two cabinet ministers to the Gulf this week to rally neighbouring states against the latest Iraqi intransigence, stressed yesterday that it was not pressing for the early use of force, writes Raymond Whitaker.

Iraq has ended all co-operation with United Nations weapons inspectors, and said yesterday it was prepared for military confrontation. The Defence Secretary,

George Robertson, who is about to leave on a Gulf tour, said at a meeting with French and American officials that military action "has to be an option, because in many ways that is the only thing that Saddam recognises", although it was "not the preferred option".

Between Mr Robertson, the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, and a Foreign Office minister, Derek Fatchett, Britain will hold

talks in all the Gulf states over the next few days. But in February, during the last period of tension, only Kuwait was prepared to allow US and British forces to be stationed on its soil, and there is likely to be even less appetite for any armed confrontation this time. Although the Clinton administration is maintaining a tough line, Britain appears to be laying more emphasis on measures such as tightening sanctions.

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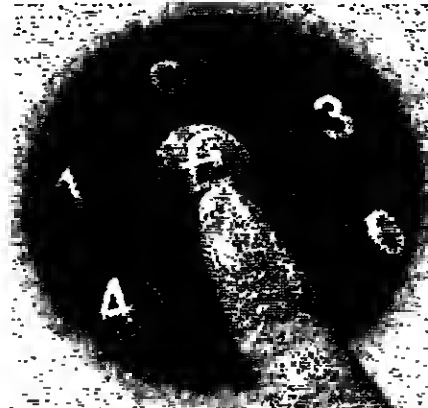
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The great cell breakout

Scientists' latest extraordinary cloning research is bringing hope to victims of strokes, cancer, Alzheimer's and infertility

BY STEVE CONNOR

ONE DAY in September last year, Alma Cerasini experienced a sensation that would change her life. A tiny blood vessel ruptured in her head and quickly starved some of her brain cells of vital oxygen. The stroke left her paralysed in the right leg and almost speechless. She was 62 and lucky to survive.

Mrs Cerasini, a nurse, was also lucky to live near the University of Pittsburgh, where American scientists were searching for volunteers for a radical form of stroke therapy. And in June this year she made history by becoming the first person to receive injections of laboratory-grown nerve cells.

Surgeons at the Pittsburgh Medical Centre, led by Douglas Kondziolka, drilled a hole into their patient's skull and injected about 2 million cells which they had grown from a batch of cells extracted 25 years previously from a man suffering from a rare type of cancer.

These cells exhibited an unusual trait. Under certain conditions in the laboratory they could be stimulated to grow into fully mature nerve cells and, once they had finished developing, they stopped becoming cancerous. The hope is that they will do the same in the brains of Mrs Cerasini and the 10 other stroke victims taking part in the first clinical trial of a brain-cell transplant of laboratory-cultured nerves.

There are obvious risks attached to the transplant experiment. One is whether the doctors can be sure that the cells really will stop being cancerous. Another is whether the patient's immune defences will accept the foreign tissue - rejection is the continuing nightmare of any transplant surgeon. A third is whether the injection will do any good anyway. Who is to say whether the 2,000 normal-looking nerve cells from a man's bizarre cancer can carry out the functions of Mrs Cerasini's lost brain cells?

A better alternative, however, will soon be possible. Scientists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

demonstrated last week that they have found the mother of all cells in the body. This is the "embryonic stem cell" that appears early in the development of an embryo, within about a week after fertilisation, and which matures into any one of the many different types of tissues, such as bone, blood, muscle, skin or nerves.

To give Mrs Cerasini the best of all possible chances of recovery, it would be better to use her own embryonic stem cells, but at 62 years old this is 62 years too late. Or is it? What if scientists could clone one of her skin cells, say, and let it develop into a week-old embryo which could then be used to extract the vital stem cells?

This scenario is not as fantastic as it might seem. The scientists at the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, who cloned Dolly the sheep, and some of the leading researchers in human embryonic stem cells, are now finalising plans to begin work on achieving the marriage of two biological disciplines. This, they believe, will lead to a revolution in the treatment of what are now incurable diseases, such as strokes, Alzheimer's, cancer, heart disease or even infertility.

HUMAN embryology raises huge ethical concerns in its own right (chiefly among anti-abortionists), but when it also involves cloning, the anxiety is even greater. The fears have been well exercised in works of fiction, from Aldous Huxley's vision of a cloned race of sub-intelligent workers to the nightmare scenario of the 1970s film *Boys from Brazil*, where clones of Hitler are raised secretly in the South American jungle.

Austin Smith, director of the Centre for Genome Research at Edinburgh University, said people should not worry that his and the University of Wisconsin's collaboration with the Roslin might produce adult human clones.

In his submission to the consultation on cloning by the Human Fer-



Mirrored image: now cell research and cloning are opening up a fantastic future

DAVID SANDISON

tilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), Dr Smith said it was crucial to distinguish between "reproductive cloning", used to produce a child, and "therapeutic cloning" - which is potentially of enormous clinical benefit - where cells are derived from an early cloned embryo for medical use. Harry Griffin, assistant director of science at the Roslin Institute, is equally adamant that the use of Dolly technology to produce a

human embryonic clone will not increase the chances of someone actually cloning children. "Embryonic stem cells are not the cellular equivalent of an embryo," he said.

"They are derived from what is called the inner cell mass of an early embryo. Other cells are needed for implantation and embryogenesis."

Nevertheless, in order to extract embryonic stem cells an embryo has to be created by effectively cloning a human being. In the case of Mrs

Cerasini it would involve extracting the nucleus from one of her skin cells and injecting it into an unfertilised human egg cell which has had its own nucleus removed.

If this could be made to divide in the same way that Dolly's original cell divided, then the resulting embryo would effectively be a clone of Mrs Cerasini and have the potential to develop into a full-grown adult. What the Roslin and Dr Smith are proposing is that the embryo should

never be allowed to develop beyond 14 days, the current legal time limit allowed for human embryos to develop after in vitro fertilisation.

Dr Griffin proposed additional safeguards. "Reconstructed embryos would need to be cultured for probably no more than seven days," he said. "Moreover, in the future, when we know more about the mechanism involved in nuclear transfer, it may be possible to avoid creating a potential embryo by 'reprogramming' the specialised cells in the test tube rather than in the egg."

ONE future scenario painted by Dr Smith is the prospect of all new-born babies routinely having clones developed of themselves in order to extract their embryonic stem cells for freezing in a tissue bank. A precedent exists already in the national tissue bank for embryonic blood cells derived from the umbilical cord of newborns, which can be used to extract important blood-forming cells for the treatment of leukaemia and similar illnesses.

"The significance of producing embryonic stem cells is that they can be amplified indefinitely in culture, can be subjected to precise genetic modification, and can be induced to differentiate into a broad range of cell types," Dr Smith says in his submission to the HFEA. "In order to incorporate nuclear cloning, however, the scope of currently permitted human embryo research would have to be broadened to encompass therapeutic applications. Such an extension to the legitimate subjects of research is justified, indeed demanded, by the prospective benefits of developing patient-specific stem cells."

The HFEA has made it clear that, as things stand, it would refuse to issue a licence to anyone proposing to clone human cells using the nuclear transfer method of the Roslin Institute. It accepts, however, that there may be sound medical reasons why it might be allowed in the future. It now appears that at least two groups of scientists are about to test the regulatory water on human cloning for the benefit of the thousands of people like Mrs Cerasini.

COUNTDOWN TO CLONING

1932 *Brave New World* published, portraying the fictional nightmare of human cloning to create a race of genetically identical humans.

1960s John Gurdon, a British biologist, produces the first clones of animals from the skin cells of frogs, but the tadpoles do not develop into adults and no one is able to reproduce the work on higher mammals.

1978 The film *Boys from Brazil* is released, depicting the cloning of Adolf Hitler in the jungles of South America by fanatical ex-Nazis.

1978 Karl Illmensee, a scientist at the University of Geneva, claims to have cloned mice, but the research is disputed amid accusations of scientific misconduct.

1986 Steed Willadsen, a brilliant Danish scientist, publishes research proving that it is possible to clone sheep from early embryos.

1996 Ian Wilmut and colleagues at the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh clone sheep using the technique of nuclear transfer, but only using early embryo cells.

1997 Wilmut announces the creation of Dolly, the first adult clone of an animal, generated by transferring the nucleus of an udder cell taken from a six-year-old sheep into an unfertilised egg cell which had its own nucleus removed.

1998 Scientists at Hawaii University prove the Dolly result was not a fluke by cloning several generations of mice.

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FOCUS: WHAT'S NEXT FOR WOMEN?

Equality time, or so they

Labour has reason to be grateful to women, whose votes were crucial to its election victory last year. But will the Government's women's unit, which is relaunched tomorrow, finally deliver on promises to tackle the discrimination still suffered by half the population? On the next four pages we talk to the politicians setting the agenda, examine why the unit believes teenage girls need role models, and hear from women about their lives – and what they think of Labour's ideas

MARGARET JAY

BY RACHEL SYLVESTER

MARGARET JAY is no ordinary woman. Her father, James Callaghan, was a prime minister. Her former husband, Peter Jay, was an ambassador to Washington. Her former lover, the American Carl Bernstein, was an award-winning journalist. Like Jane Austen's Emma Woodhouse, Baroness Jay is handsome, clever and rich. A former television reporter, now enjoying a glittering career in public life, she exudes glamour and confidence, and buzzes with energy. Educated at a private girl's school and at Oxford, she has, everyone agrees, "had it all".

At the age of 56, Baroness Jay of Paddington has become one of Tony Blair's favourite Cabinet ministers. She even advises the Prime Minister on the sleeping arrangements in Downing Street. After asking her to throw hereditary peers out of the House of Lords, Mr Blair has given her another difficult task: to look after women. He could not have found a less typical example. At 6ft tall, Baroness Jay towers above most members of her sex. Can she ever understand what ordinary women think? "I know, I know. I've had such a privileged life," she says disarmingly. "How can I be a role model when I came out of such a different world from most people? And do you think young women will want to be represented by a grandmother?"

Tomorrow, Baroness Jay will relaunched the women's unit, the body set up by the Government to tackle key issues – education, pay, working conditions – affecting the female half of the population. Since Harriet Harman left, this group of civil servants has been beefed up to include around 40 full-time staff. It has been moved from the Department for Social Security to the Cabinet Office – a symbolic change which puts it next to Downing Street.

There has also been a shift of emphasis. Unlike her predecessor, the new minister for women does not consider herself a feminist. "In the 1960s and 1970s I wasn't involved in that. I was already working, already had children. In politics, feminism is seen as negative, complaining about things; it's perceived to be about separatism. You don't have to be negative like that."



Baroness Jay: "You need to teach people to become part of the working world"

MYKEL NICOLAOU

Entering housewifely hostess mode, she bounds across to a table in her office where lunch has been put out. "I can't survive without eating," she booms. Baroness Jay doesn't understand the point of eating disorders and is one of the few ministers who will tuck into sticky toffee pudding for tea. Nor does she feel blighted by sexism. "Maybe there were times when I felt I'd been disadvantaged because I was a woman – but you can't let it bother you, you get on with it. I don't want the women's unit to be exclusive."

The only thing that irritates her is the press's obsession with personality, particularly her love life (the *Daily Mail* called her a "man-cater"). "You can make a speech in the House of Lords and they say she was wearing a

red dress. I mean for God's sake, if they did this to the men – he was wearing a horrible tie or he looked as though he hadn't had a haircut for weeks – everyone would think it was ridiculous." She admits this is probably an example of sexism, but is unwilling to blame only that. "It's the whole personality cult, *Hello!* magazine syndrome."

Baroness Jay is an unabashedly girly woman who sees no need to be aggressive or masculine to get ahead. She does not like positive discrimination, and it is clear she disagreed with the use of all-women shortlists to get more female Labour MPs into Parliament. "We've gone beyond that. We should build on it rather than fight the old fight." The new slogan of the women's unit – "Better for women,

better for all" – shows that the ultimate aim is to help men too.

The minister has identified teenage girls as a priority. "Girls tend to do well in the early years of secondary school, then fall away," she says. Celebrity role models, including people like former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell, are being recruited to encourage teenage girls to have more confidence. "When I was at school we used to have classes in citizenship. You need to teach people to become part of the working world."

The minister for women is concerned about the 20 per cent gap between the incomes of men and women. The main cause of this is the fact that female employees take time out to have children, and Baroness Jay believes that a solution is to encourage

companies to improve life for working mothers so that more women can work. The women's unit plans to set up a working group with representatives from the retail trade and nursing to draw up a blueprint for more family-friendly policies. "Why should operating lists be done at 8 o'clock in the morning because the consultant says so, when that's the time the theatre nurse is taking her kids to school?"

This minister understands the difficulty of juggling career and family. In her twenties, as a BBC reporter, she rushed from the school gates to interview experts about euthanasia; in her thirties she washed the peanut butter off her cocktail dress before meeting presidents. By the time she was an adviser in health authorities in her forties, then head of the National Aids trust, her children had flown the nest. Now she speaks approvingly of the "working grandma syndrome". But she hates the idea of being a superwoman.

The secret, she says, is order. She may be in the Cabinet, but Baroness Jay still spends Sundays fussing around her west London home, straightening cushions and putting flowers in vases – "mimbling," her husband, Michael Adler, an Aids specialist, calls it. "I make lists about the lists," she says. I've got the list which tells me what to do and I've got the list which edits the list. There is a price to pay for this female obsession with neatness, she thinks. "It's what makes women seem rather unimaginative. People often wonder why there are no great women composers, or famous painters – it's about being interested in process. That may mean you don't have the philosophical ideas but it helps you get through life. I'm not creative in the imaginative sense. I'm not sure I could sit all day and think about the great work of art I'd do. I'd be looking to see what I could put on the list."

Baroness Jay was a Blair babe while the Prime Minister was in nappies. She is New Labour's natural aristocrat, in the manner born as much as the hereditary peers on the red benches she rules. She is hardly typical of her sex but she understands women's concerns. "We worry that we seem intimidating because of the privilege thing," she says. "But people don't see you running around in circles making your lists and ironing your blouse." You wouldn't hear many other Cabinet ministers saying that.

Her husband even stays at home to look after the kids

FIONA REYNOLDS

THE FORTHRIGHT head of the women's unit is used to campaigning. Fiona Reynolds has worked for most of her life in the green movement. But she has never been a direct-action eco-warrior. Her most recent former incarnation was as head of the determinedly genteel Campaign for the Protection of Rural England.

She will use the same undemonstrative tactics in her latest job that she deployed for 11 years at the CPRE – persuading mobile phone companies to disguise their pylons and forcing the Government not to cover up greenfield sites. "I see myself as an influencer rather than a campaigner," she says. "I prefer to use persuasive arguments than shock tactics. It's about winning hearts and minds."

With 40 civil servants under her control but a budget of only £1.5m, she will never be able to fund policy proposals from her Cabinet Office headquarters. Instead, the women's unit must get other ministers to put its ideas into practice. It is intended to play a similar role to that of the social exclusion unit – although it does not have the specific patronage of the Prime Minister to give it the same weight.

Ms Reynolds knows that the

proposals she draws up on teenage girls and women's incomes will have to be implemented by Jack Straw, David Blunkett and Frank Dobson. "We are not the programme deliverer, we are the facilitator. We help other hits of government ensure that what they are doing addresses the needs of women."

But she also wants to persuade government departments to think of the equal opportunities implications of their own legislation. The women's unit has drawn up a "policy appraisal" document, which will be sent out to all ministers and policy officials this week, setting

out how they should vet all legislation to take account of women, ethnic minorities and disabled people.

"In policy-making and employment practice, we have to consider the impact on those who have found the actions and attitudes of others placing obstacles in the way of equality of opportunity," the paper says. "Most particularly the impact upon women, people from different ethnic minorities and disabled people."

"It is your responsibility to assess properly how your work is likely to affect different groups and to take action to ensure they are taken into

account from the beginning of the policy process and in its evaluation."

The head of the women's unit has taken her equal opportunities message to heart. She was educated at Rugby School for Girls and did her degree at Newnham College, Cambridge; she has always been a dedicated career woman. Her own husband, who is a teacher, now stays at home to look after their three children while she goes out to work. "I've always been more career-orientated than him and he loves looking after the kids," she says. "But there is still only four per cent of the population that lives like us."

Rachel Sylvester



Reynolds: seeking change



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CASH POINTS

- Among full-time employees, women's hourly earnings are only 80 per cent of those of men. Women earn only 73 per cent of men's weekly average earnings – partly because men tend to work longer hours than women.
- Age affects the pay gap: at the start of their working lives, women and men in non-manual occupations have broadly similar hourly earnings. But this gap widens at older ages. Men aged 50-59 in full-time non-manual occupations earned on average almost £5.30 an hour more than women in the same category.
- In 1979, only 24 per cent of women returned to work after having children. By 1988 this had almost doubled to 45 per cent. By 1996, as many as 67 per cent of women returned to work.
- 72 per cent of working mothers with children aged 0-4 use informal care, but it is still the mother who provides the majority of childcare (82 per cent for pre-school children, 78 per cent for schoolchildren in term time, 77 per cent for schoolchildren in holidays).
- Nine out of 10 lone parents are women. In 1996 lone parents headed around 21 per cent of all families with dependent children in Great Britain – nearly three times as many as in 1971.
- In 1996 41 per cent of women were in a personal pension scheme compared with 64 per cent of men. 66 per cent of professional women working full time were members of an occupational scheme compared with 28 per cent of female unskilled manual workers. Figures for male equivalents were 75 per cent and 39 per cent respectively.
- In 1996-97 the average independent income received by women in retired couples was around 40 per cent of men's.



Women of the Nineties: (from left) single mother on benefit Sabrina Hammoudi, full-time mother Sara Hornby, company director Janetta Hamilton-Brown, and university lecturer Dr Sandi Mann

'Maybe this time they'll give us

OUT IN THE REAL WORLD

INTERVIEWS BY HESTER LACEY

THE SINGLE MOTHER ON BENEFITS

Sabrina Hammoudi, 25, has a two-year-old son, Jawad, whom she is bringing up alone in Dalston, east London. Her weekly income is £67.

I think a department to look after women would be a good thing. I hope they are talking about helping single mothers go back to work – but even if you get a job, train tickets are too expensive, you can't put your kids in the crèche because it's too expensive. We need cheap crèches, cheap fares. And it would help if they could give us courses to help us go back to work. I really want to work: being on benefits is no good. If my son sees his mum is on benefits, he will think that's okay, and it's not. I used to take any work I could, even small jobs, though I can't now because I'm signing on. I worked for a cabinet maker, and it was all "You're a woman, you can't do this, can't do that, you can't lift this, you can't use the tools" – they wouldn't even give me a chance and in the end they made me feel I had to leave.

The Government promises a lot; they've said they will help young mothers. They've said that if we go to work we will still get a little benefit, but things like rent are so high when you're working. They should do things properly, back up their policies with other help, so going out to work doesn't become a disadvantage. I want to go back to work – I'll have to fight and struggle but I will go back.

THE FULL-TIME MOTHER

Sara Hornby, 29, has two daughters, Emily, two, and Sophie, nine months. She lives in Eton with her partner.

I've never heard of the women's unit and I don't know what it does. I think the only way you can have respect for women is not making an issue of it, not saying "Oh, you're a woman, you need this, that and the other." I've got two children and I feel they are my responsibility, that it's up to me to look after them. At the moment the facilities I can call on are fantastic. My health visitor is great: there is a local council-run playgroup and mother-and-toddler group. You never feel isolated at this stage in your children's lives. What I'd like the Government to do is put all the money they possibly can into education and health for their futures. All my friends have similar concerns; everybody wants the best for their children. I'm aware that Labour is making an effort and I'm pleased that they're concerned about families. Hopefully by the time my children get to school age, something will have been achieved. My priorities centre on my children – being a woman is irrelevant. I think the time, energy and money that would go into the women's unit could go into other things. Most of the issues it would deal with would be resolved if there were more resources in other areas.

THE TEENAGE MOTHER

Mary Brown's four-year old girl was born when she was 17. She and her daughter live in London with her mother, and her weekly income is £100.

I've never heard of any special policies for women. What I need more than anything else is just more money. I'm

on benefits but I do the odd bit of cleaning for cash just to get by, to pay the bills, buy things for my little girl. I couldn't do it if I didn't live with my mum, so she can look after my daughter when she isn't working herself.

I had my baby when I was 17 and, although I wouldn't be without her now, I wish I'd waited a few years. I left school at 16 without any exams. I just expected to get by but then I fell pregnant. Now life is really hard. I can't give my daughter what I'd like her to have and I can't ever go out much – I stay at home because I hate seeing things in the shops that I can't buy. When I was younger I could go out for a drink, get stoned with my friends. It wasn't too bad – we'd have a laugh, but now I can't afford it. I do smoke cigarettes but I've cut down.

If the Government wanted to help me I'd want them to help me get a job. I wouldn't mind trying to do some exams but anything would do that pays a bit more than what I'm on now. But I'd have to have someone to look after my little girl because my mum can't do it all the time.

THE COMPANY DIRECTOR

Janetta Hamilton-Brown, 30, is the director of two successful companies, Only Lunch, an introductions agency, and Only Voice, a voice-mail dating service. She is divorced, has two children, Daniel, seven, and Oliver, five, lives in London and her yearly household income is around £50,000.

I was vaguely aware that there was a women's unit. I think it's a totally negative idea. Positive discrimination does not work. I can honestly say that I've never felt disadvantaged in business because I'm a woman. You gain respect by acting honestly, whatever your sex. People should

be chosen on merit rather than because politicians have said: "Oh, we have to have a certain number of women doing this or doing that." Blair's babes: what does that do for us? Having Tony Blair surrounded by a group of pretty faces is just a token gesture. I don't know how I feel about the Government. I don't keep my eyes open for "women's issues". I just get on with running my business.

If Labour is interested in helping women, more and more are choosing to have a career and be working mothers – why not address that? I've chosen to have a live-in nanny because my children were little when I separated from my husband and I felt it was important to have another responsible adult in the house. It's an expensive option, and I'm always on a tight budget. I'm taxed on my nanny's wages, and that's on money that has already been taxed when I earned it: perhaps the tax system could be looked at so that doesn't happen. And there should be some sort of regulation for nannies – why aren't they recognised as a profession? We are all paranoid about who we leave our children with.

THE ACADEMIC

Dr Sandi Mann, 30, is a lecturer in occupational psychology at the University of Central Lancashire. She is married, and has no children.

I knew that a women's unit was being talked about but I didn't know it had already been set up. What worries me is that it marginalises issues as "women's issues" and they shouldn't be. I can't think of a single issue that should be dealt with exclusively by a women's committee. One example is childcare – I would be very frustrated and angry to see that on the "woman's agenda" when it should

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I never experienced discrimination in my work. When I worked at the TSB I knew a lot of senior women; they had some forward-looking policies. On the Stock Exchange women were well respected, and there were women at director and executive level. When I set up my business with Pronuptia, where I have a licence to run the shop with a female partner, it didn't even occur to me that we were two women doing this - we had the credentials to be taken seriously. When New Labour got in I felt they were a version of Conservatism and I didn't feel they were especially pro-women. I can't think of anything I'd want the women's unit to be working on. I've never felt disadvantaged because I'm a woman.

I've heard of the women's unit and I think it has to be positive. There's the fear that an establishment run for women will place the responsibility for children, the home, elderly relatives squarely on women's shoulders, but women's lives are different to men's and I think the Government does need to recognise that. These are issues that need to be looked at to be sure that women get the best deal. I'd like to see financial support for childcare, private nurseries up and running, and free after-school clubs. And extended leave if children are sick, generous maternity leaves, and more flexible working hours - I work flex-time and it's a massive help. Men are in this situation too, though, and I think it needs to be recognised these aren't just women's issues. I was pleased that Harriet Harman was doing something on women's safety, tackling crime against women and the safety of women

I've never heard of the women's unit. If anything positive comes out of it, that'll be fine, but I can't see it being of much practical help for women; it'll mean more bureaucracy. Unless they are prepared to put their money where their mouth is it won't do any good. In terms of wages I've been disadvantaged all my life; women are at a disadvantage when it comes to the labour market, particularly working-class women. Middle-aged women might make it into the boardroom but working-class women struggle. It's not so much a fact of gender, it's a fact of class. I'd like to see the heat taken off single parents.

The women's unit has done a great deal of research, gathering facts and figures which demonstrate the pay differential at work, for instance, and the results will be published tomorrow. But some of its fire has been stolen

BY JOAN SMITH

The forsytenet men who preside in Blair's Cabinet grew up at a time when it was impossible to ignore feminist theories. The Cabinet and the House of Commons contain a substantial number of women who cut their political teeth on these. What remains to be seen is whether their own statements and reports are as honest, committed and as equal to Blair and his male colleagues or a piece of lip service. Judging by what has happened so far, Blair and the Women needs an urgent rethink if it is to get better reviews than its predecessor.

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POOR Clare Short just can't get it right. She is the sentimental left's mascot in the Blair cabinet, a woman of warm if often incoherent emotion, an anguished "friend of all the world". But the cares of office have been cruel to the International Development Secretary. Her none-too-long fuse was ignited by the volcano-stricken, but impotent people of Monserrat, who will "be asking for golden elephants next" – not quite the language her doting admirers expect from her. Now she has put her foot in it again. Interviewed on the *Today* programme about the catastrophe in Central America, and about what the British government is doing to help, she said (with characteristic lucidity) that "debt relief takes too long to be relevant to helping the people who need immediate relief to make sure we don't get the present crisis becoming an absolute catastrophe because hunger and disease spread". For her pains, she was called "arrogant" by the Tory shadow minister, Gary Streeter. But, of course, she was right. She had been right, in a brutal way, about Monserrat; she was right when she landed herself in yet another row when she said that some of the activities of aid agencies in Sudan during the famine were "unnecessary", and she is right about debt relief.

There is another kind of arrogance, which tries to deny the sheer awful majesty of nature and what used to be called acts of God. Such acts will always be with us, and it is hubristic to speak as if human will, or mastery of the universe, could prevent earthquakes and hurricanes. Moreover, in the short term debt relief is irrelevant to the people of Honduras and Nicaragua in their agony. What they need is aid (which is "necessary" in this case, please note, Ms Short), in the form of medicine, food, and above all the helicopters and vehicles which will bring these supplies. The very concepts of outstanding debt or interest rates are utterly meaningless to a family whose home has been swept away by typhoon and torrent and who have had nothing to eat for days. Equally, to compare a supposedly inadequate western response to Hurricane Mitch with the speed with which ailing hedge funds are rescued is too glib, and savours not merely of *bien-pensant* attitudinising but of a category error.

In an age when several hundred billion pounds are transferred electronically on the money markets every day, saving any financial institution (as opposed to helping the victims of a distant natural disaster) can be done literally at the touch of a button. And on the principle of "the greatest good of the greatest number", it is more important that the economy of the developed world should be protected: if it collapsed, the future of all mankind would be unimaginably terrible.

But it is precisely, and only, in the short term, that Miss Short is right; for Mr Streeter is right, too. We can pass over the sheer gall of a Tory spokesman who says this. What did his party do about Third World debt as it accumulated during its 18 years in office? There is a better argument that the guilty hand-wringing of western politicians and publicists. When hard-hearted free-marketiers insist that contracts should be honoured and debts repaid, they forget "neither a borrower nor a lender be" – or, more to the point, that for every borrower there must be a lender. Saying that debtor nations "must pay" implies a moral judgement: the tropical countries which borrowed so many billions in the 1970s and 1980s should be chastised for being so feckless, at whatever cost to their unfortunate inhabitants.

But what about the fecklessness of the western bankers who lent the money? Some years ago, the chairman of one of our great banks said publicly that these loans were mistaken in hindsight but had seemed a good idea at the time. To which the only answer was that it hadn't seemed so at all to anyone who could stop and think. A country like Zaire, lent several billions, was quite obviously a bad risk from the beginning. But then these were the self same bankers who had thought Robert Maxwell a good risk for several hundred millions in loans.

However it may be in terms of immediate relevance, the burden of Third World debt is a very real problem in the longer term. It may not be a bad advertisement for the western political economy that a hedge fund is propped up; it is a horrible display of our values if we are prepared to see poor people starve in the name of financial rectitude. And it will do us no good if underdeveloped countries are obliged to repay interest which annually exceeds their economic product. There are plenty of precedents for the orderly rescheduling or cancellation of national debt; indeed, the failure to arrange such cancellations after both world wars had a disastrous consequence. The interests of prudence as well as humanity demand no less – and if it shook up some complacent folk in the City and Wall Street, that would be no bad thing in itself.

Spinning off course

GIVEN the coverage dedicated to the subject, we could be forgiven for thinking that the 50th birthday of the Prince of Wales had come and gone. In fact it's this coming Saturday, which gives all of us in the media – and however many readers, listeners and viewers care to join us – another week to speculate on the day, a couple of days to report on the day itself and as long as it seems commercially advantageous to analyse how it all went. It is what news editors call having three bites of the cherry. If all in the drama had played to the script devised at St James's, Britain would now be celebrating a future king who had carefully rebuilt his life after the death of his former wife, a man mindful of his duties, a sensitive thinker finding peace in middle age with the woman he had always loved. These, certainly, were the images conveyed by the first great wave of background pieces on the Prince, painstakingly assembled with the help of his advisers. But then the ad-libbing started. First, some helpful figure "close to the Prince" reopened old wounds by telling the biographer Penny Junor that the Prince had committed adultery only after the Princess of Wales had done so. Now London Weekend Television has somehow formed the impression that the Prince would like his mother out of the Palace as soon as possible. This is what happens when advisers, courtiers and PR men give themselves bigger roles than those they have been assigned. Walter Bagehot warned against letting "daylight in upon the magic" of monarchy. Today he would have to counsel against royal spin-doctors who allow bright light to illuminate dark arts.

Why the moral majority is more
forgiving than we thought

Bill Clinton's let-off by the voters reveals a new tolerance, argues Fintan O'Toole

BILL CLINTON has been accused of many things, but revealing awkward truths is not one of them. Whether answering questions about his private life or explaining his public policies, his instinct has always been to tell people what he thinks they want to hear. And yet, without meaning to, he has just challenged some powerful assumptions. He has forced Americans to admit, as they did in last week's mid-term elections, that they are not as righteous as conservatives like to think they are. He has revealed that the real moral majority is made up, not of religious zealots but of confused people doing their best to come to terms with the perplexing diversity of human desires. He has brought into the open the dark secret of modern morality: that people are not all that anxious to be scandalised.

Most commentators agree that Clinton was not the issue in the elections. That is in itself astounding. Since January, his affair with Monica Lewinsky has dominated the news. He has suffered personal disgrace on an unprecedented scale. His nasty little secrets have been magnified into affairs of state. His most embarrassing moments have been fed into the all-devouring maw of the worldwide web. He has been the victim of an attempted *coup d'état* conducted not with tanks and helicopters but the more devastating weapons of shame and humiliation. Accepted logic suggested that this *coup* must succeed. That was based on certain assumptions about the feelings of "ordinary people" out there somewhere beyond the reaches

of the political and media establishments. Whatever these ordinary people might feel and believe, they surely could not bear to think of Clinton's pathetic need for gratification, or to picture their president as an overgrown schoolboy pleasuring himself in the White House toilets. They could not help being so disgusted that their sheer revulsion would overwhelm all political judgement. Clearly, however, they can help it. While much of the media and the political elite continues to work from a narrow notion of what is and is not acceptable to the general public, a new moral majority has been emerging, not just in the US but in most western democracies. It is not, as conservatives would characterise

not the same as self-righteousness, that tolerance and compassion are moral virtues too.

Consider, for a moment, the following scenario. A Labour minister, regarded as a happily married man, visits a part of a public park that is known as a gay pick-up spot. The police get involved. Confused, enigmatic accounts of the event become public knowledge. The minister, looking haggard and hollow-eyed, appears on television, barely able to mumble his way through a rehearsed statement. He resigns and his public career is effectively over.

This happened – four years ago in holy Catholic Ireland. Except that the minister in question, Emmett Stagg, did not resign and was not

the knowledge that a government minister was having trouble with his sexuality.

What is happening throughout the West is simply that people have been exposed to a much broader range of human behaviour than before. We used to carry in our heads a rough-and-ready distinction. There were normal people and weirdos. The normal people got married, had children and kept their problems to themselves. The weirdos appeared to the normal people only in the law courts and the scandal sheets. Most of what they did was criminal; the rest was so wonderfully strange that it merited banner headlines in the *News of the World*. By definition, normal people were not weirdos and

or smart, respectable daughter is homosexual. Millions have lived through adultery, separation and divorce. People still experience pain and disillusion through all the vagaries of sexual desire. But the sky has not fallen in. Even those who regard homosexuality, for instance, as a grave sin have noticed that fire and brimstone are not raining down on Greenwich Village. A minority of religious obsessives may think of all this as the end of the world, but most people have concluded that even if they don't like what other people do with each other's bodies, they can live with it. It's not that the citizens are now less moral, merely that they are less gullible and less hypocritical. They have revised their expectations of leadership downwards, from exemplary goodness to an acceptable level of badness. They have concluded that morality is seldom plain and never simple and indecent things are often done by decent people.

Even for the Christian right in the US, the really outrageous thing about Clinton is not that he commits adultery; it is that, because he persists in getting caught and yet surviving, he has destroyed the pleasant fiction that respectable people would never tolerate a known sinner in the highest office. He has reminded us that these days a lot of sinners are respectable people.

Fintan O'Toole is a columnist with the *Irish Times*, drama critic of the *New York Daily News*, and author of *A Traitor's Kiss: The Life of Richard Brinsley Sheridan*, just published in paperback by Granta.

Citizens are not now less moral, merely less gullible... and they have revised their expectations of leadership downwards

it, decadent, amoral or so mesmerised by consumerism that it can't be bothered to distinguish right from wrong. But it has lost faith in saints and heroes. It has given up on the illusion that there is such a thing as a perfect human being and that if we can only find these people and elect them to office, everything will be okay. It hopes for moral rectitude but doesn't necessarily expect it. It is, oddly enough, rather taken with the old religious ideal of hating the sin but loving the sinner. And it has somehow concluded that morality is

forced out. In a country which is still the most religious in western Europe, there was a feeling that he should not be destroyed. He stayed in office. Two years later his rural and small-town constituents re-elected him.

Ireland is a small and relatively unimportant place and it is likely that Ron Davies and Tony Blair had never heard of Mr Stagg. If they had, they might not have been so quick to presume on the intolerance of ordinary people in the 1990s. They might have considered the possibility that the British public, no less than the Irish, could actually live with

weirdos were not normal. But it hasn't been like that for a long time now. On the one hand, because we now talk about child abuse, for instance, we have learnt to question the appearance of normality. On the other, the law no longer automatically defines sexual behaviour that departs from the supposed norm as criminal perversion. Popular culture, in the US and elsewhere, has become wildly confessional. Every variety of sexuality is displayed in the endless carnival of daytime TV. Yesterday's weirdos are today's guests on *Oprah*.

Millions of ordinary parents have discovered that their nice, caring son

How dare they gag Sir Cliff, our national treasure!

THE AGREEABLE
WORLD OF
WALLACE
ARNOLD

IT IS OFTEN forgotten that when King Edward VIII and Mrs Simpson were conducting their clandestine romance one of their strongest mutual passions was music and one musician in particular.

When Mrs Simpson arrived at Fort Belvedere, generally on a Friday afternoon, just as dusk was settling in, it was her custom to rush up the main staircase and into the library. There she would find the then Prince of Wales's most precious possession: his gramophone.

Flick, flick, flick with practised wrist movements, Mrs Simpson would flick her way through the Prince's formidable collection of 78 records. Past jazz she would flick, past dance music and classical music and the big band sound, past the early recordings of King George V's Christmas addresses, past string quartets and comical turns from the North, past recordings of Negro choirs, bassoon trios and French matinee idols. Ah! At last her eyes would alight on the one recording that she and her future husband both knew as "our tune". Without waiting for her lover to enter the

room and take her in his arms, she would ease the recording on to the turntable. And then the distinctive opening bars of the music – that music – would begin.

"CON - GRAT - U - LAAAAAAA - TIONS and CELE - BRAAAAAAAA - TIONS!" It was Cliff Richard singing his famous flagship song, the song with which he was to conquer the Eurovision contest just over 30 years later. As the sound of this familiar music eddied its way into his second-floor bedroom, the Prince would wake from his slumbers and a wide smile would radiate his face, for he knew then, as he would know always, that Cliff's voice was proof positive that the love of his life had come home, and was eager to dance.

Thus Cliff had woven himself once more into the very fabric of our nation's story. It was not the first time, of course, that he had captured the hearts of Britain's foremost couples: a choral version of "Goodbye Sam, Hello Samantha" had been sung by the Welsh Male Voice Choir at the wedding of King George V and Queen Mary; and on Armistice Day 1918, the crowds

had burst into a rendition of "Mistletoe and Wine". Similarly, when Florence Nightingale was in search of an entertainer to lift the hearts of the casualties in the Crimea, it was to Cliff Richard she turned. And Cliff did not let her down: his version of "Daddy's Home" was said to have brought tears to the eyes of even the most hardened veterans, and as the closing bars drifted into the wind Cliff was lifted high upon the officers' shoulders.

Thus has Cliff Richard grown to embody the very thrust and veft and rub and hoof of Great Britain in all her vibrant, ever-youthful glory. And his influence spreads far and wide: the distinctive rhythms of "In the Country" are echoed in the familiar bullish speech-patterns of Winston Churchill's wartime broadcasts, and even John F Kennedy could not resist bursting into an up-tempo version of "We Don't Talk Anymore" while addressing the people of West Berlin ("Ich Bin Ein Cliff Richarder") in June 1963.

In Cliff came the honour of being the inspiration behind both the first song ("The Day I Met Marie")

sung on the surface of the moon, and the very last song ("Summer Holiday") played by the orchestra as *The Titanic* sank beneath the waves.

And now (Deep breath, Wallace, deep breath, and blow. All better!) And now Mr Chris Evans, no doubt speaking for and on behalf of his puppetmasters in New Labour, has decided to place a gag on Britain's greatest living treasure, denying Cliff the platform that is rightfully his. Callow young disc-jockeys have followed suit, snubbing one of the greatest Britons of this, or indeed of any other, century.

Personally, I do not know Sir Cliff well, though he was a good friend of Dame Edith Sitwell in the late 1930s. But I know when an injustice has been done. This is why I call on readers of this column to open their windows at mid-day today, lean out into the street and sing "Living Doll" at the top of their voices. That way, even Mr Blair will be unable to claim he cannot hear the cries of a people in anguish – and a people who are resolved to fight for Britain and Sir Cliff. You have been warned, Mr Blair, you have been warned.

Downing Street is not so far from Clapham Common

WE HAVE most of us done it at one time or another. The cause may be drink, lust, a desire to show off or, more usually, simple foolishness. We may act on impulse, going for a silly walk with troublesome consequences. Usually they last only a few days. What the newspapers call a gaffe – one of those words, like “zany”, used exclusively by the press rather than in ordinary discourse – can commonly be repaired by an apology, a note, a present, most of all the passage of time. The embarrassment can still bring a blush to the cheek at the mere thought. But it can equally well become the foundation for a humorous anecdote, polished over the years by endless retelling, at first amusing, finally tedious.

Sometimes, however, matters do not work out so conveniently. The episode changes lives and ruins a career. Things are never the same again. One such victim is before us today. It is always sad to see a reputation in shreds. I refer, of course, to Mr Alastair Campbell.

As confessions seem to be in fashion, I shall now make one of my own. On the morning following Mr Ron Davies's resignation, I was

putting in an appearance on Talk Radio to publicise the paperback edition of my book *The Road to Number 10* (Duckworth £12.95). My fellow-guest was the engaging and ubiquitous Mr Matthew Parris, a figure as omnipresent in the political life of the nation as... well, as Mr Peter Mandelson.

In all the talk, by the way, around the BBC's prohibition of any discussion of Mr Mandelson's private life, which was caused by Mr Parris's observation on *Newsnight*, no one has said anything about the originator of the ban, the corporation's political adviser, Ms Anne Sloman (formerly Duncan-Jones). Originally it was thought that Ms Sloman had acted entirely on her own initiative. Now it is being claimed that her instruction flowed from a telephone call from Mr Mandelson to Sir Christopher Bland, the BBC chairman. I used to know her in the early 1970s, when I was an occasional presenter of *The Week in Westminster*, and she the regular producer. She was a tremendous bossyboots even then.

Once I was conducting an interview with the late Eric Heffer. After it was over she bustled into

the studio, announced her disappointment at our endeavours and instructed us to go through it again. I said I thought the interview had been perfectly all right. Heffer agreed, in more vigorous language. He had, he said, no intention of redoing the interview, having better things to do with his valuable time.

Ms Sloman persisted in her view. I weakened not only because I am, like most Welshmen, anxious to please, but also because I knew that as producer Ms Sloman was the boss. Heffer was made of stronger stuff. It was a case of the irresistible force and the immovable object. Eventually the object moved. With much muttering, he agreed to do the interview again. Afterwards Ms Sloman bounced in. “That was much better,” she said. In fact – by which I mean, as people usually do when they use the expression, in my opinion – it was no better, no worse, but much the same.

Anyway, in that other studio some years later on, Mr Parris maintained that, so far from behaving with resolution and skill, Mr Campbell had behaved foolishly. He and Mr Tony Blair had added to the mystery instead of solving it. The



ALAN WATKINS

majority view of the press at this point was that Mr Campbell and Mr Blair had behaved decisively, even if ruthlessly.

How different, how very different, from our home life under dear Mr John Major! In those unhappy times an erring minister's hand would be detected in till or up skirt; whereupon Mr Major would declare his unshakable loyalty to the politician concerned. If a till was involved, he would say that no offence had been committed and demand further evidence. If it was a skirt, he would say (as Mr Davies has been doing, though skirts not much in view) that people's private lives were their own business.

Then our brave lads would go into action with their lethal cheque-

books, dreaded tape recorders and sworn affidavits; the scandal would turn out to be much juicier than anyone had supposed; and the wretched minister would depart in shame after being ceremonially stripped of his official car. The one-sided battle generally took about three weeks before Fleet Street's Finest could claim yet another regal honour.

Mr Campbell and Mr Blair were determined to avoid the opportunity for any such victories over the new administration. I agreed with most of my colleagues rather than with Mr Parris that, over Mr Davies, they had succeeded. But (and here the element of confession enters into it) I was wrong. Not only had Mr Davies himself failed to be open about what happened on Clapham Common and in adjacent regions of south London on the night in question, Mr Campbell had not been entirely frank either. Nor had our truth-telling Prime Minister, who went on television during the Bernie Ecclestone affair to say: “Trust me, I'm a politician.”

The line pursued by Mr Campbell and Mr Blair was that, though they might not be entirely clear

about the events on and around the Common that evening, their ignorance was due to the unforthcoming policy being pursued by Mr Davies. Mr Campbell went further: “There is no evidence at all of any gay link or drug link. There are no salient facts in our possession that are not in yours.”

Those were his fatal words. But it now appears that Downing Street, early on that Tuesday morning, were in possession of facts which no one else knew except Mr Davies and the police. It was the deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police who informed first Mr Jack Straw and then No 10. It was Mr Blair who summoned Mr Davies, not Mr Davies who asked whether he could call on Mr Blair. The Treasury Solicitor supposedly threatened the *Sun* with legal action if it made “any suggestion of homosexual activity”. Even before Mr Davies resigned, Mr Alan Michael had been instructed to prepare himself for his new responsibilities as Welsh Secretary. Though he is trying to play with the word “salient”, Mr Campbell has manifestly been telling what Mr Chris Patten used to call “porkies” when he was seeking the

demotic touch. Having made a thorough mess of Mr Davies's resignation, Mr Campbell and Mr Blair are now set to make an even more comprehensive dog's breakfast of the consequences of that resignation. Last week I advised Mr Michael not to allow himself to be forced into contesting the leadership of the Welsh Assembly, a post to which Mr Davies was to have moved next year, having defeated Mr Rhodri Morgan for the nomination. I told him, but he wouldn't listen. The foolish fellow is prepared to fight Mr Morgan for the job.

If he wins, he will have to leave the Cabinet after only a few months and will never be heard of again, getting wetter and wetter in the soft rain coming off the Bristol Channel. But he may not win. Mr Morgan may be the victor. He certainly deserves to be. Why my colleagues call him a “maverick” I do not know. All he has done, apart from smoke out a few Welsh quagmires appointed by the Tories, is summon Mr Campbell before the Commons committee over which he presides. Clearly, the time has come for him to order Mr Campbell to turn up a second time.

The first fight for freedom

The 1914-18 war was a tragedy, but not a pointless one, argues John Grigg

ASK ANYBODY for an opinion on the relative merits of the two world wars and the answer is likely to be overwhelmingly adverse to the first. Most people still appear to believe that in 1914 Britain got involved in an unnecessary war – the product of “power politics” without any moral content – whereas in 1939 the country embarked upon a crusade for freedom and democracy. This conventional wisdom is at last coming under challenge, but it remains absurdly dominant. Historians who should know better continue to subscribe to it. As we prepare to mark the 84th anniversary of the end of the First World War, the idea that it was a futile bloodbath is still being aired.

The truth is that on both occasions Britain went to war in defence of its vital interests. Self-preservation was the primary motive for our involvement in both wars; both were equally struggles for national survival. There was also a strong element of idealism in both wars: stronger, actually, in the first than in the second. Since Britain and France (the principal Western allies in the first war) were countries with genuinely free institutions, their fight for survival in the first war can be regarded as a fight for the general cause of freedom. And the same is true of the Commonwealth and the US in the second war.

Part of the reigning mythology is that the second war, unlike the first, was a “people's war”. The suggestion is that in 1914 the British people were committed to war by their rulers and then roused by propaganda to a state of mindless patriotism, whereas in 1939 they acted spontaneously and wholeheartedly to oppose the spread of Nazism. In reality, the decision to enter both wars was taken by the British government and parliament of the day, without any formal reference to the British people. In 1914, however, there was profound popular feeling in support of Belgium, whose territory had been invaded and which was putting up brave resistance.

Most members of the Liberal government at the time knew that Britain fought to intervene to prevent the defeat of France, which was Germany's immediate objective, since it was evident that this would be followed by a German hegemony over the European continent – indeed, if Russia were also defeated, over the whole Eurasian land-mass. But there was some division within the government, which the strength of popular indignation about Belgium helped to resolve. In a sense the people did play a part in the decision to go to war in 1914, and neither their patriotism nor their idealism was mindless.

In September 1939 Britain was faced with a German invasion of Poland, a more distant country to which the British government had given a guarantee earlier in the year. As a result, an ultimatum was sent and war with Germany followed, with public acceptance though with markedly less public commitment than in 1914. There was sympathy for the Poles, certainly, though far less intense than the sympathy felt for the Belgians a generation earlier. And, of course, it is a discreditable fact that, whereas the restoration of Belgian independence remained a British war aim and was duly achieved in 1918, in 1945 Polish independence was sacrificed to inter-allied expediency. When the Second World War ended, Poland had to exchange one form of alien tyranny for another. Only the eventual collapse of Soviet power liberated the Poles.

In the first war the army was based on voluntary recruitment until 1916. Next time there was conscription from the word go.



Soldiers at the Somme, 1916. Idealism ensured that the army in the First World War was based on voluntary recruitment until 1916

a worse threat to civilisation than Imperial Germany. But it must be remembered that German unity under the Hohenzollerns had been achieved by Bismarck by “blood and iron”, in three wars cynically provoked; and that his successors inherited his brutal approach to politics while abandoning his realistically limited aims. The Germany of 1914 may have been less unpleasant than that of 1939, but it was unpleasant enough, not least in its anti-Semitism. (Those who cherish the illusion that Imperial Germany was different in kind, rather than in degree, from Hitler's Germany, should read the work of two German historians, Fritz Fischer and John Röhl.)

Britain in particular was even more threatened by the Kaiser's Germany than by Hitler's, because the former had built a huge fleet deliberately to challenge the sea power upon which our freedom depended. Hitler's fleet was never remotely a match for the Royal Navy in surface strength, even before the crippling losses it suffered in the Norwegian campaign (the only benefit to us from that otherwise deplorable episode). In the supreme crisis of 1940, Britain was acutely threatened from the air, but – even if

the Battle of Britain had not been won by the RAF – perhaps not mortally, granted the country's continuing superiority at sea.

Much is made of the horrifying human cost of the first war, and indeed it was horrifying. But the total human cost of the second war was on a vastly larger scale – an estimated 60 million dead compared with about 10 million. British losses on land were admittedly much lower (between a third and a half of the earlier figure), but mainly for the reason that in the second war the British Army was far less heavily engaged. In 1914-18 Britain and France together carried the heaviest burden, and together won the decisive military victory. In the second war the decisive contribution on land was made by the Red Army, before the British (anyway outnumbered by the Americans) re-established a major front in western Europe.

Incidentally, AJP Taylor makes the telling point that at Alamein “the proportion of casualties among men actually engaged was as heavy as on the Somme”. But, of course, far fewer men were engaged; the desert war was a side-show compared with the Western front in 1916.

The human cost of the second war was not only far larger; it also involved civilians at least as much as combatants. Nightmarish as the first war was, it was essentially a conflict between fighting men. In the second, civilians were treated as legitimate targets. For two years, for instance, the British war machine was principally directed not against the armed forces of the enemy, but against unarmed civilians. In February 1942 a directive was sent to RAF Bomber Command to the effect that bombing should in future be focused “on the morale of the enemy civil population”. Which was the nobler, more idealistic war, so far as Britain was concerned?

The historian Niall Ferguson argues that Britain could safely have stood aside in 1914. The British Empire (he thinks) could have survived, while continental Europe would merely have experienced earlier the sort of unification to which it is now being subjected. This seems to me a doubly perverse and fallacious argument. In one crucial sense the British Empire was not weakened, but rather strengthened, by the First World War. The self-governing dominions played a vital part in it, and came to maturity as a result of it. Yet their

effective independence did not lead to disintegration of the British system. The Commonwealth of Nations (apart from Eire) demonstrated its solidarity in 1939. If India had been given dominion status after the first war, as it should have been, I believe that a free India would also have entered the war against Nazi Germany.

As for continental Europe, it is grotesque to compare the European Union that has evolved since the last war with the union that would have resulted from a German victory in 1914. The EU that we know is a free association, based upon democracy. The Kaiser's European union would have been imposed by a militaristic power and organised to suit its interests.

The Second World War could have been avoided if the victorious allies had stuck together and resisted the revival of German power. Grave mistakes were made after the victory, but the victory itself should be remembered with gratitude. Britain's perception of the threat that Germany posed, and resolute stand against it, should not be dismissed now as an aberration. The performance of our country in the First World War was magnificent, and deserves eternal honour.

Stabs in the back for an old feminist



JOAN SMITH

SO WHAT do you think about Germaine Greer's new book? It's no good protesting that you haven't read it. Neither have I, and it hasn't stopped journalists ringing to ask what I make of it. Other people have been getting calls about it too, including my friend Maureen Freely, who is a feminist author as well as a colleague of Ms Greer's at Warwick University. The conversation moves swiftly from the book itself – not a very fruitful topic since it isn't due to be published until March next year – to questions about whether Ms Greer has anything to say to younger women.

At this point, I start asking questions of my own. Are these journalists (usually younger women themselves) phoning round critics to ask whether they take Eric Hobsbawm seriously, given how old he is? Are they writing articles suggesting that no one over 30 wants to read Julian Barnes and Ian McEwan, who no longer count as younger men? Of course they aren't. Indeed, they barely seem to understand what I'm getting at, which is the peculiarly nasty bias against older women that informs their inquiries. I'd call it gerontophobia if the root, from the Greek word “geron”, didn't apply specifically to old men – and we feel very differently about them, as a generation of Hollywood stars, including Jack Nicholson and Clint Eastwood, have discovered to their advantage.

Not that Ms Greer is ancient. She will be 60 next year, an age at which men are often considered to be in their prime. But the fetishistic worship of young female bodies and minds in our culture has a dark side which expresses itself in fear and loathing of post-menopausal women. In the course of these phone calls, which effectively invite me to dismiss Ms Greer in advance of knowing what she has to say, no one has yet gone so far as to employ words such as hag, hag or crone. What is being suggested is that the author of *The Female Eunuch* is irrelevant to women under a certain age because she is not in the first flush of youth, as well as being unmarried and childless. (Just like Jane Austen, you might say, who labours under the additional handicap of being dead.)

As it happens, Ms Greer was briefly married, a subject on which I have heard her speak very amusingly. But “young women don't see why they should be preached at by Germaine Greer”, a reporter from another newspaper recently informed me, as she prepared a story suggesting that the new book is already dividing feminists into warring camps.

At one level, this is merely a symptom of the weary reality

that editors love fights within radical groups, especially feminists, whose ideas make them uncomfortable. But the willingness of journalists to go along with it – I first received one of these calls back in February – is shocking.

It's true that neither Ms Greer nor any other adult knows precisely what it is like to be a 15-year-old girl in the Nineties. But the implications behind the campaign against her are astonishing. A lifetime's experience of analysing cultural attitudes has suddenly become, for women writers, a handicap. Authors are no longer expected to come up with their own theories but to gather those of other people and write them down, like a New Labour spin-doctor creating policy from focus groups. If my experience isn't reflected in someone's work, the logic runs, how can I possibly be expected to read it?

What this represents is an alarming retreat from ideological debate, the practice of testing your ideas against other minds whose theories you don't necessarily accept. Men do it all the time, invoking oldsters such as Marx and Keynes and Hegel in their analysis of contemporary politics and economics. But what is happening to Ms Greer shows that double standards are still being employed against women – and by other women, which makes the offence all the greater.

The most obvious explanation, that some form of mother-daughter rebellion is being acted out in the realm of culture, seems not to have occurred to them. But we can hardly expect that degree of self-awareness from people who are so terrified of unfamiliar ideas that they feel compelled to trash them before they've appeared in print.

I TURNED up at the *Woman's Hour* studio one morning last week, expecting to take part in a discussion with a former *Woman's Hour* presenter, and was promptly invited to stay on for an item on ancient Greek gynaecology. (We old feminists are so versatile.) This gave me the pleasure of meeting Helen King, a lecturer in classics at Reading University, whose new book, *Hippocrates' Women*, charts the way in which ancient medical theories have influenced modern beliefs about hysteria and female circumcision. It is worth buying Ms King's book for the index alone, which features entries on beetle pissariness, sneezing, Gulf War Syndrome, and “nosebleeds: as diverted menstruation”. I'm only sorry Ms King's publisher talked her out of sticking with her original title, *The Ancient Greek Period*.

Crises don't bother him, nor does his unpopularity with staff. The DG is pursuing his own agenda. By **Godfrey Hodgson**

Out to save the BBC – and he might

THE LATEST FOOLISH list of the "most powerful people in Britain", offered by Channel 4 and the *Observer*, lists Sir John Birt, who has been director-general of the BBC for the past six years, as the 16th most powerful person, and the third most powerful broadcaster, ahead of Lord Holford, but behind Rupert Murdoch and even Gerry Robinson of Granada.

This judgement is either absurdly uncomprehending or remarkably subtle. Such lists, for a start, habitually confuse "power" with "influence". Perhaps, too, this one is trying to make a subtle point: that a Murdoch or a Robinson is freer to do as he pleases, whereas a director-general of the BBC is constrained by chairman, board of governors, board of management, ultimately by the Home Secretary, the charter, the licence and agreement, and by uncle Tom Cobley and all.

By any common-sense measure, though, Birt is certainly one of the most influential, and the most powerful, people in the country. He presides over an organisation with a far larger share of television and radio than ever Murdoch is likely to have, and with an even greater weight in the worlds of politics, high culture, popular culture, classical music, local news, education, religion and everything else that people in Britain live by than Murdoch would ever want to be burdened by.

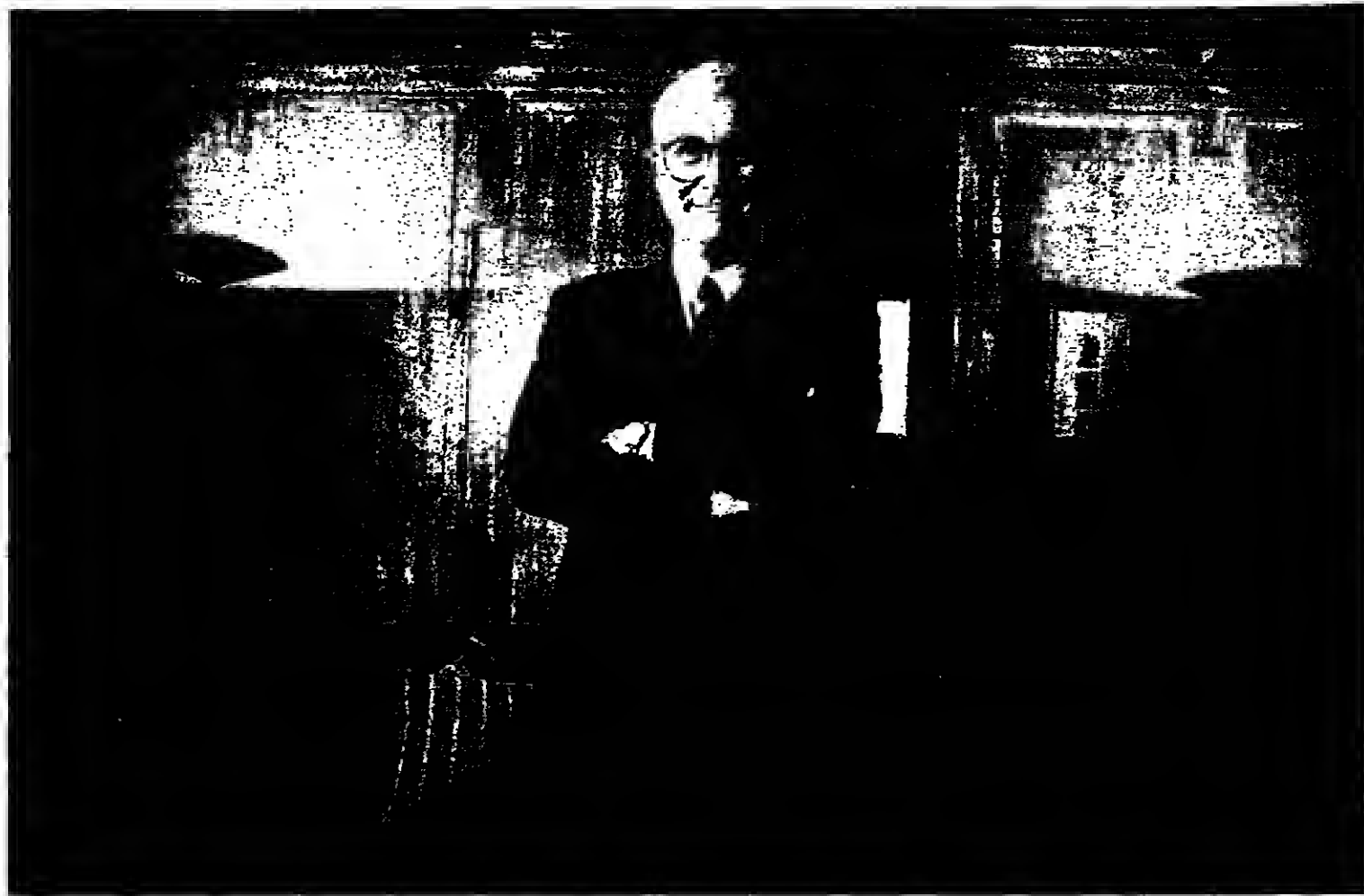
This has not been a wonderful time for BBC management. They lost the cricket to Channel 4. A *Blue Peter* presenter was caught sniffing cocaine. Several thousand news employees went on strike – in part because Birt's salary has been growing at twice the rate of the journalists'. Star performers drift off to other channels and, to cap it all, a memo leaks ordering journalists not to mention Peter Mandelson's private life.

Any garden-variety television executive would greet each such day with apprehension and respond to every successive crisis with a despairing, "That's all I need!". But not Birt. These darts bounce from his hide almost unnoticed, because his eyes are on more distant horizons. His mind is on saving the BBC, on less, and many would say that, like the American artillery officer in Vietnam, in order to save the place, it has been necessary to destroy it. A fairer judgement is that in his thoughtful, authoritarian but ultimately shrewd way he has made as good a fist as could be made of saving what was worth saving from an institution in crisis.

John Birt came out of Liverpool at the only moment this century when it was a good place to be from: he was a contemporary of the Beatles, and still identifies with pop music and the Liverpool renaissance. Like many other ambitious young men in a society more concerned with the symbols than the substance of class, the young Birt portrayed himself as coming from Liverpool's working-class. He did, but after skipping a generation: his father was a successful executive in a tyre company.

After an excellent education at the hands of the Christian Brothers, Birt read engineering at Oxford, but spent much of his time making a film, a sentimental idyll in the Sixties idiom. He got a job at Granada Television where, in a crucial episode, he was sent off to "expose" David Frost for something or other, and returned, like St Paul from Damascus, with his mind changed.

The decisive encounter in his career came when



Management is in his blood: but in recent weeks John Birt has had to preside over a series of setbacks

GRAHAM TROTTER

he teamed up, at the London Weekend Television current affairs programme *Weekend World*, with Peter Jay. Son of a Labour cabinet minister and a mother who was a power in the old London County Council, Jay had a politician's suspicion of journalism in general and investigative journalism in particular. At *Weekend World*, he and his editor, Birt, worked out a new style of television journalism. It was friendly to power, willing to be boring, serious and analytical. It put film and pictures in second place to logical arguments, and often forced interviews to fit a preset mould. Its ethos, launched by Birt and Jay (or Jay and Birt?) in a number of articles, was that television journalism has a bias against understanding, a bias which must be corrected.

By the mid-Eighties, as Jay moved off to be Her Majesty's ambassador in Washington, then chief of staff to the grotesque Robert Maxwell, Birt moved quietly up the executive ladder at LWT. His style was untypical in the television industry. In personal relations he was approachable, given to *Sixties* affectations like wearing a French baker's jacket and to the amiable habit of kicking a football about in the lunch hour with researchers.

It has been said that he is a good friend and a

bad boss. As an executive he was authoritarian. He kept his door shut and was to be seen only by appointment. It was said, perhaps apocryphally but in any case revealingly, that, to discourage frivolous proposals, he would entertain programme ideas only if they had 17 points to them, not 16 or 18.

While Birt progressed at LWT, the BBC was increasingly hitting trouble. Arithmetically its audience could only decline with the arrival of satellite and

cable channels. Its hierarchical, unionised structure was out of sync with the cost-cutting, free market spirit of the age. It was the butt of hysterical attacks from right-wing propagandists such as Paul Johnson and from the papers owned by its broadcasting rival, Murdoch. Above all it was hated by Margaret Thatcher and her party chairman, Lord Tebbit. After a series of political rows, the director-general, Alasdair Milne, was forced out, and Thatcher made

it plain that she meant to bring what she saw as a left-leaning, extravagant state enterprise to heel.

This was the situation when Birt arrived at the BBC, first as deputy to Sir Michael Checkland, then, from 1992, as director-general. From the start, he inspired an extraordinary degree of hostility, in part because he made BBC staff afraid for their jobs, but also because he seemed not to understand their ethos. He was also seen as a Thatcherite, quite wrongly: his personal political allegiance has always been to the Labour Party.

Malicious stories, some true, circulated about what were seen as his insensitivity and arrogance. At one executive meeting he was said to have insisted that everyone tell a joke, and then marked them for their presentation. In private Birt has a sense of humour, often aimed at himself, but, because his job is enormous and his management style aloof, few saw that. He also has a temper, usually under control, but which, with his physical bulk and sharp mind, can make him intimidating.

He has always been unusually single-minded. Almost his only recreation is walking the mountains around the Welsh cottage where he and his wife, Ann, an American-born painter, go as often as they can.

PROFILE JOHN BIRT

I take New Labour to be my lawful wedded nanny



ANNE
MCELVOY

THE FAMILY is the minefield of modern governments. Any full-hearted endorsement by New Labour of Old Marriage was bound to be followed by the news that some male MP was about to leave his spouse and brood for an interloping female. One duly did, only to be followed by the even more distracting multi-part saga of Ron Davies's visit to Clapham Common.

Labour's Green Paper on the family was itself an odd concoction. It went out of its way to make a lot of people upset by delivering edicts on what sort of family is best, while shying away from embracing the full consequences of its megaphoned moral rigour. "On balance," it announced, "children are best brought up in a two-parent family by their natural, married parents." On what balance? The only sensible answer would be a statistical one, meaning that if you took the number of unhappy families with married parents and their genetic offspring, and compared them with the unhappiness quotient of single parents and other arrangements, the smug marrieds would carry off the We Got It Right trophy.

This is unsurprising. Marriage is a tested way of living together and bringing up children. People who stay married are more economically stable than those who don't. Divorce impoverishes all but the lawyers. The presence of two parents of different gender is generally a benefit, assuming that the parents are not so incompatible that the strain is intolerable all round. We don't need the Government to tell us that marriage is a good thing. But what is it precisely that they are trying to tell us about cohabiting parents, families which include the offspring of a previous relationship, or for that matter, adopted children?

Families are not just numbers of people: they are individual units which make their way in the world, some more happily than others. The way the Green Paper divided families into two groups – married-with-kids given an A grade, and cohabitants awarded a B minus "could do better" by Home Secretary Jack Straw – will sharpen the appetite for more financial discrimination in the tax and benefit system between types of family.

If the Government had hoped to silence its critics with this approach, it was doomed to disappoint. You can't satisfy fundamentalists other than by giving them everything they want. Having

objected that New Labour did not speak clearly enough about the superiority of heterosexual marriage to other models of co-habitation and child-rearing, they finally get it – and complain that the mere endorsement of wedlock is not enough. The next demand is that the married family should be rewarded more substantially than the non-married one, so that only the foolish, the rich or the conscientious objectors manage to resist joining the ranks.

The trouble with real, flesh and blood people is that they are very good at finding ways round the sort of unbending rules for life that the family fundamentalists want. If you give them the money, they'll get married all right. This does not, however, make them behave as the moralists require after the deed is done. In Germany, it is worth living in "tax marriage", even if you never see your spouse and have run off with a string of malleable night-club hostesses. That bit doesn't show in the figures, of course, so German people appear to observe the traditions of marriage far more than is really the case.

We could go down this road of institutionalised farce. Our own fundamentalists have come up with a far more direct way to make us stay married when we no longer wish to be so – namely by making it more difficult to get divorced. Easy. In the make-believe world of those who seek to impose a secular version of Sharia law, retaining a stigma for marital break-up will change our minds about splitting up. We managed one of the highest divorce rates even with our fault-obsessed divorce law, which so ably compounds the hurt of an intrinsically hurtful experience. So heaven knows why they think this proposal will turn the tide.

Like all monomaniacal believers, the pro-family lobby believes that there is a single solution to complex social problems. If only the Government would

stint with the decree nisi and make married families richer than non-married ones, Britain would change from a rather confused society still trying to make sense of the consequences of free markets, sexual liberalisation and the decline of traditions into a harmonious, ordered and secure place. The belief that moral rearmament can be effected using the levers of the state would be wrong if it weren't so unlikely to succeed.

Melanie Phillips, the columnist who has emerged as the most authoritative and eloquent of the fundamentalists, attributes the Government's hesitation to discriminate more firmly in favour of marriage to the fact that "the vast majority of ministers and advisers are themselves caught up in irregular lifestyles". But, as Ms Phillips has also noticed, these "irregular" lifestyles are very frequent – one might say regular. She is arguing for a return to a norm which is no longer normal. One might plausibly argue that inexperienced young men and women are "caught up" in single parenthood and that they should be warned off doing so until they are able to cope, financially and emotionally. But it is misleading to say that the millions of mature people who cohabit are "caught up" in something. The truth is that a lot of people choose to live that way.

Ms Phillips, at least, is honest about the endgame of all this. She believes that "the strongest families are those where there is the clearest separation of roles". So it is under the Taliban, but most of us would not volunteer to embrace it. The remorseless logic of this position ends up with "primary and secondary roles in life". Women, unsurprisingly, get the primary role in child-care, backed by the state through its disbursements, and men get first call on the available jobs.

Meanwhile, the sensible parts of the Green Paper – which discuss ways to make marriage and christenings appealing to those without religious beliefs, and which aim to expand the roles of health visitors and midwives beyond the first months of a baby's life in order to help vulnerable families through the most stressful times – are all mocked by the impossibilities as being either too partial or too intrusive.

Far nobler to dream of grand and righteous designs. They won't be happy until they get a Government which presumes to apportion the roles of men and women at home and in the work place. Not with my vote, it won't.



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Supporters rally to defend a well-loved scavenger

Here's to FilmFour and all who sail in her

SUNDAY NIGHT and, like 25 million other viewers, I'm sitting in front of the television. But this is not your usual, end-of-the-week flop in front of the box. Tonight is the launch of Channel 4's independent cinema channel, FilmFour, and, with a small but growing handful of technological pioneers around the country, I'm tuned in via digital satellite.

This may seem a rather low-key way to be celebrating the launch of the first new channel in C4's 16-year history, but the time for partying was last night. Fifteen hundred guests braved the rain to join our celebrations in a dressed-up bus garage.

We greeted them with C4's speciality shock tactics: lashings of 1950s porn and all but naked dancers plus Nick Broomfield's S&M documentary *Fetishes* projected 10 times normal size on to a partition wall. Unfortunately, no one seemed to notice. Apparently the party attracted a good number of "faces" from the worlds of film and TV along with the professional liggers. I'll have to take their word for it – the place was so packed I spent most of the night staring at necks, not faces.

Still, the squeeze and the scale of the celebration are measures of the importance C4 attaches to this launch. Like it or not, multi-channel television is the future, and established broadcasters must embrace it or face a slow but inevitable decline into

irrelevance. C4 believes it is giving viewers something new for their subscription: a channel playing British, US and foreign-language films that you won't see at the Hollywood-dominated multiplexes.

OH DEAR. Monday morning and I'm flicking through my diary hoping to quash the impression that all I do is attend meetings and watch television. Unfortunately, the best the diary can offer is meetings. All meeting-ed out by the evening, I go home and turn on the television. What else is a television executive supposed to do? It's fashionable in this business to swear you never watch it, because watching television is perceived to be a low-brow activity. Can you imagine theatre workers, musicians or writers boasting that they never go to plays or concerts, attend the opera or read a book or newspaper?

As I flick through the channels using the electronic programme guide it's reassuring to see that the terrestrial stations are the first to appear. But something is not right. I surf past BBC1 (channel 101) and BBC2 (102) and then straight to C4 (104). At 103 there's a blank, with ITV nowhere to be found. There is a self-defeating logic in ITV withholding itself from digital satellite, a decision that



THE DIARY MICHAEL JACKSON



Shock tactics: FilmFour is sent into orbit with a showing of the S&M 'Fetishes'

makes it seem inward-looking and short-sighted. What a neat piece of positioning. Rather like continuing to produce silent movies after the invention of the talkies.

DIGITAL OR no digital, some things about British television don't change, such as BBC costume drama. Andrew Davies's adaptation of *Vanity Fair* promises to be one of the best pieces of television this year. Marc Munden's direction is superb and invites you to do what all good television does: gain a fresh perspective on the familiar. There have been many good TV costume dramas, but few that really invite you to rethink your attitude to a classic text.

Yet to read the newspapers on Tuesday morning after the overnight ratings have come in – and ITV has launched a successful spoiler campaign – *Vanity Fair* is a flop. How can attracting 7 million viewers to Thackeray be characterised as a flop? It's 3.5 million more than bought the *Sun* on Tuesday, albeit 2 million fewer than watched *Taggart*. The press is on an anti-BBC roll, from cricket to cocaine. But, as press watchers will remember, it was only a couple of years ago that the *Daily Mail* was conducting a vicious campaign against my predecessor, Michael Grade, labelling him Britain's pornographer-in-chief.

Still the BBC's troubles allow me to point out to journalists at our winter programme launch that our presenters – including the hilarious Ali Gec from the 11 O'Clock Show – are contractually obliged to take cocaine at least once a day.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT and time for the leaving party of C4's documentaries head, Peter Moore. Peter is a highly talented and idiosyncratic editor who has commissioned some of the channel's best documentaries, including *The Club* and Clive Gordan's extraordinary film about Chechnya, *The Betrayed*.

He's also something of a Peter Pan figure. He was photographed on his first day at C4 in 1989 and has successfully managed to avoid being photographed ever since, thus ensuring he has remained for ever 40 years old.

Arriving one day at Amsterdam airport, a suspicious customs officer examined his passport and suggested to Peter that something was amiss.

It turned out that in his quest for everlasting youth, Peter had been using a photograph of his 13-year-old stepson, Oscar.

Michael Jackson is the head of Channel 4.



JEREMY CLARKE

END OF STORY

IF MY OLD man were to write his autobiography, and all his ex-girlfriends went out and bought a copy, it would be a bestseller. As far back as I can remember he has been leaping furiously from woman to woman like a mountain goat. He's the ugliest man on the planet, but somehow he seems to know how to press all the right buttons when it comes to pulling the hards. When he gets into his stride, they are like putty in his hands.

How Mum put up with it for all those years I don't know. It got to the point where Sid was coming in through the cat flap. To evade detection, Sid told me, he used to scrub his private parts with carbolic soap before he came home – until Mum got wise to it and added carbolic soap to her list of incriminating smells.

When Mum died about six years ago, I thought Dad might do a Thomas Hardy and be all overcome with guilt and remorse about the way he had treated her. To be frank, I didn't expect a collection of love poems, but I did hope that her unexpected death might make him stop and think. Some hope of that, though. Sad to relate, the old goat couldn't even wait until after the funeral, and got off with one of Mum's distant cousins at the post-interment wine-and-twilets do. I could have chimed him.

But I'm happy to say that he's got his comeuppance at last. He's fallen in love for the first time in his life, aged 71, and it has sent him into emotional turmoil. At last he's getting a taste of his own medicine.

For the past six months he's been seeing Veronica, a Spanish lady he met at a posh art gallery in Marbella. When Sid first introduced me to her, I must admit I quite fancied her myself. She's right out of the top drawer: mid-50s, fit, tanned, jet-black barnet, good legs, all the right hits and bobs, and moves well. And judging by all the tomfoolery hanging off her, she's not short of a quid or two either.

The night Sid introduced us, she offered me her hand in such a seductive manner, I could have wrapped her up and taken her home with me there

and then. In fact (Sid would kill me if he ever found out), Veronica and I did get it together soon afterwards, after the three of us had had a boozing night out at Little-Eyed Dave's restaurant in Torremolinos. Unfortunately, I'd had a little too much to drink and we were both a bit ill.

At first I naturally assumed that Sid's relationship with Veronica was going to be as transient as all the others. The Four Fs and all that. But six months later, Sid is totally smitten and reported by reliable sources to be following her around Marbella like a doting mallard.

This was confirmed when I received the first of a remarkable series of drunken, emotional phone calls from him. He sounded a complete mess.

"Son, I've never felt like this before," he said, weeping down the phone. "Every time I see her, me legs just turn to jelly."

"Have you thought about getting a Zimmer frame, Dad?" I said.

The following day he rang again.

"Son, I've asked Veronica to marry me and she's thinking it over," he said. "The tide's in her court, now," he added mysteriously – then he accidentally dropped his telephone by the sound of it and we were cut off.

And last week I was woken up in the middle of the night by yet another phone call from Marbella. This time Dad sounded jubilant.

"Son, she says yes! She says yes!" he yelled.

"Congratulations!" I said. "But do us a favour son. Veronica says that after we are married, she wants you to call her 'Mum'."

"Call her Mum?" I said, aghast. "She's got to be having a laugh."

"Please, son. It's not much to ask."

"No," I said.

"Look here," said Sid. "As well as being the light of my life, Veronica is worth over a hundred grand. Surely you can bloody well call her 'Mum' for a hundred grand."

"Just look at it like an investment."

I said I'd think about it.

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THE HODDLE INTERVIEW

The England coach talks to Nick Townsend: 8

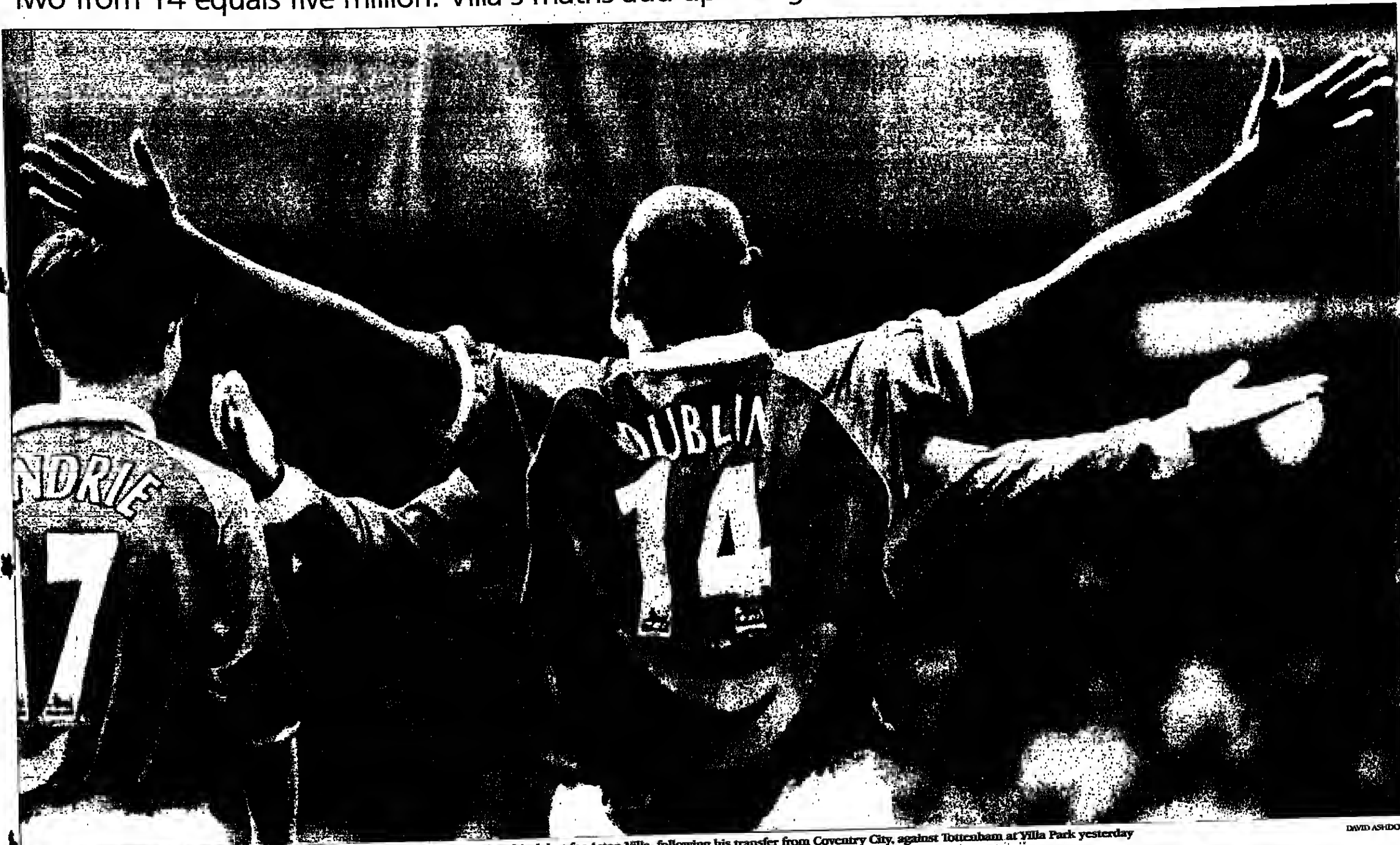
GENTLE BEN GETS TOUGH

Rugby's true professional by Andrew Longmore: 14

CRISIS IN THE CARIBBEAN

Stephen Brenkley on the Lara controversy: 12

Two from 14 equals five million: Villa's maths add up to a good deal as debutant's goal keeps them top



Glad to see the back of him: Dion Dublin celebrates after scoring his second goal on his debut for Aston Villa, following his transfer from Coventry City, against Tottenham at Villa Park yesterday

Dublin doubles up in singular debut

FROM VIRTUALLY under the bar Dion Dublin does not miss, and it took only 14 minutes for the England striker to start demonstrating that the £5.75m Villa laid out for him may not be quite as profligate as people have suggested.

The 29-year-old striker had been signed from Coventry on Thursday, after his name had been touted around seemingly every club in the Premiership, and after surviving an incident in the first two minutes when a more pedantic official than Rob Harris might have ordered him off, he ended up with two goals, a third ruled out for offside and the sort of reception that used to be accorded to the likes of Andy Gray. It was some start by any standards.

Yet, if he had arrived at Villa Park anticipating a rapturous reception, what Dublin could not have foreseen was a Tottenham team deciding that it was a charity afternoon for their opponents' new acquisition.

A few weeks ago, under Christian Gross, this would have been described as a contest between Villa's British beef and Tottenham's sacrificial lambs. For all the galvanising effect of George Graham that still summed up much of an afternoon when Spurs' rearguard appeared determined that their new manager should start finding replacements for them.

Yet, three down early in the second half and with the Villa faithful merely awaiting the expected avalanche of goals, Tottenham replied with an Anderton penalty and a goal from substitute Ramon Vega, and so there was a nervous finale before Gregory's team and their supporters could savour victory once more.

The concern for every home fan had been all too evident at the start. Out of Europe, out of the Worthington Cup - admittedly fourth on Gregory's wish list - the question now was whether they would yield their Premiership lead, too, over the weekend. The answer was that his men had appeared to have lost none of their desire since the defeat by Chelsea and Celtic, though after Tottenham had reorganised after the break and deployed a back three, the visitors made far more of a game of it.

It was nearly an ignominious

Nick Townsend at Villa Park	
Aston Villa	3 Tottenham Hotspur 2
Dublin 31, 35, Collymore 48	Anderton pen 65, Vega 76
Half-time: 2-0	Attendance: 39,241

start for Villa's new boy. After only 90 seconds the number 14 challenged for a high ball with Spurs defender John Scales and in the process put an elbow across his face. It was not dissimilar to the incident that resulted in Stuart Pearce being sent off at Newcastle last week. Dublin, however, escaped with a caution as Scales received treatment.

Yet it only required him 14 minutes to start posing the aerial threat which persuaded Villa to fork out £5.75m. Alan Wright's free-kick caused consternation in the visitors' penalty area and Dublin rose to flick a back header just wide of

Espen Baardsen's post. In these early minutes there was evidence aplenty to explain why Tottenham had conceded 18 Premiership goals to Villa's three. They looked constantly vulnerable to the powerful surges of the new strike pairing and Merson appearing from deep.

Collymore has clearly rediscovered his self-belief under Gregory, and when he turned away cleverly from a defender between the touchline and corner of the box, his effort, which appeared merely speculative, ended up rebounding off the top of the bar with Baardsen looking slightly bemused.

All Tottenham had to show for their first-half endeavours was a particularly audacious run from David Ginola, restored to the team after a one-match suspension. It culminated with the Frenchman electing to shoot from an acute angle which brought a splendid save from Michael Oakes.

On the half hour, Villa made the breakthrough through their domination deserved. Alan Wright's corner fell kindly to Dublin after striking Scales and the striker is not given to missing opportunities from a foot out. Graham added to his already copious notes.

A one-goal lead at half-time might just have reflected Villa's superiority, but Dublin must have known it was his day when Darren Anderton and Scales obligingly both left a ball to each other and allowed him to nip him and drive under Baardsen before the visitors' defence had time to re-group.

Graham's half-time team talk would have made interesting listening. In contrast, his Villa counterpart Gregory could afford to respond with a two-handed salute to the Holte End. They were all Dubliners now, and the second half was only two minutes old when Villa further embarrassed the Londoners. Lee Hendrie found Collymore with a superb ball and the reformed striker did excellently to elude the challenge of Sol Campbell before lashing home a spectacular third.

Tottenham found some inspiration when a shot from distance from the foot of Anderton struck the bar and bounced down the wrong side of the line and they were finally rewarded for a policy of second-half adventure when defender Ugo Ehiogu felled Ginola in the area. Anderton scored without ceremony from the spot.

When Iversen headed on an Anderton corner and Vega stuck a foot out to turn it into the net, it set up a rousing final few minutes. Dublin thought he had claimed a hat-trick minutes later when he converted Hendrie's sweet pass only to find the referee had whistled for offside.

As Tottenham fought valiantly for an equaliser, substitute Rory Allen came close with a volley, but in truth this was Villa's afternoon. Or to be completely accurate, it was Dublin's.

HODDLE ON THE IMPOSSIBLE JOB

It's going to be no different for anybody else whether I come out of this job in two years, three years, four years, whatever. We've seen it before with my predecessors and it's getting worse. It's going to be an impossible job. No one's going to want to take it. But as long it does not affect people close to me I'll continue to give 100 per cent. Once I felt the criticism was stopping me doing that and got ridiculous, I'd give up anyway.

Glenn Hoddle talking to Nick Townsend - Page 8

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S1

Home truths haunt Evans

Exit Brown and Celtic go on spree

WHETHER IT was player power or fan power that finally tipped the balance, Jock Brown yesterday bowed to what had long seemed inevitable and resigned from his job as Celtic's general manager.

Brown, the brother of the Scotland manager Craig, offered his resignation after discussions with the Scottish champions' chairman, Fergus McCann. It was accepted by the board, readily to judge from McCann's subsequent statement.

It has been apparent for some time that "home sweet home" was not likely to be hanging on any wall inside Celtic Park. McCann made it clear that, despite last season's

championship success, to which Brown's "contribution was significant and appreciated", all was not well.

"Unfortunately in recent times it became clear to the board that despite Jock's best efforts, progress in some important matters and issues had become compromised," McCann said. "This may have had an adverse effect of the current football atmosphere and the backing of our supporters. I have discussed these matters with Jock and he accepts this. Consequently he tendered his resignation."

"Jock appreciates that there is a feeling within the massive Celtic support that a significant

change is desired. He acknowledges that under the circumstances he requires to be the major part of this change."

The problem with winning the championship can be that the only way from there is down. Celtic, though, showed lemming-like tendencies. Wim Jansen, the Dutchman who led Celtic to their first League title for 10 years and the Scottish Coca-Cola Cup, walked out even before the championship trophy needed its first polish, citing problems with Brown. Then, in his recent book the midfielder Paul Lambert, who joined the club last season after a spell in Germany, highlighted his difficult relationship

BY MARK BURTON

with the now departed general manager.

Brown expressed disappointment at having reached his decision, but he added: "It would be insensitive and inappropriate for me not to acknowledge the difficulties my continued involvement here would present for the club."

He described his time at Celtic as "a tremendous learning experience" and expressed no regrets at having taken the job, in June last year.

Celtic plan to maintain their present management structure and replace Brown as soon as possible. For the moment, play-

er contracts, transfers and related matters will be handled by McCann and Eric Riley, the club's financial director.

That is no great surprise as Brown's appointment was part of a restructuring of the club to suit the demands of the modern game at the top level. Jansen arrived to take on responsibility for team affairs at the same time, replacing Tommy Burns. If the aim was to put Celtic in a position to break the Rangers nine-year stranglehold on the Scottish League, then to that extent it worked.

The fans were suspicious of Brown, a lawyer and television commentator, who brought an intellectual approach, having

had no experience of the professional game. The high point of his footballing career was playing for Cambridge University at Wembley.

Supporters were not impressed that Jansen walked out and, wanting a big-name replacement, they were not exactly beside themselves with joy when the job went to Dr Jozef Venglos, who had a less than successful spell at Aston Villa in 1990-91.

He has presided over an unhappy team producing indifferent performances, whose irritations came to a head in a row over bonus payments only two days before they were due to play Croatia Zagreb in the

European Cup. Defeat in that tie pitched them into the UEFA Cup, but their second crack at success in a Continental competition ended when they were comfortably beaten by FC Zurich last week.

It seemed Brown's departure lifted a weight from the players' shoulders. Less than three hours after the news broke, they set about demolishing a supposedly resurgent Dundee 6-1 in the Premier League.

The Swede Henrik Larsson led the charge with a hat-trick, dispatching the first two from the penalty spot. The second of those spot-kicks followed the dismissal of Barry Smith for a foul on Mark Barchill, who



Brown: Unpopular choice

scored the third goal, from a knock-down by the debutant midfielder Labomir Moravcik. The teenager Barchill, making his first start of the season, added the fourth goal, too, and after Larsson had completed his hat-trick from Moravcik's pass, Simon Donnelly made it six from Jackie McNamara's pass.

Pressure mounts on Liverpool's undynamic duo while Gascoigne inspires depleted Boro to stunning draw

Home truths haunt Evans

Andrew Longmore at Anfield

Liverpool	1	Derby County	2
Redknapp 84		Harper 6, Wanchope 27	
Half-time: 0-2		Attendance: 44,020	

LIVERPOOL, ONCE the byword for consistency, are becoming the eccentric old dears of the Premiership. After their midweek heroics in Valencia, Liverpool returned to league duty expecting to erase a disappointing display at Leicester with a victory over their traditional whipping boys. Derby had not won at Anfield for 28 years, but the Liverpool defence gifted them two well-taken goals inside the first half hour and the rest was all uphill. To add insult to injury, Derby had six first-team regulars out and pitched in Kevin Harper, who scored within six minutes of his full league debut, and Steve Elliott, who was the pick of the Derby defenders.

"We can't keep climbing mountains," Roy Evans, Liverpool's co-manager, said. "It was not entirely poor defending, we also had enough chances to win the game." The thoughts were echoed by the French half of the managerial double act, whose working relationship with Evans will now come under even closer scrutiny. "We can't have a relationship which works in Valencia and one which doesn't work now," said Gérard Houllier. But doubts which surfaced in an inept defeat at Leicester were redoubled here and the patience of the most faithful fans in the league is beginning to wear as thin as Houllier's hair. Liverpool were whistled off in half-time and jeered off at the end, with Paul Ince, the captain, being singled out for opprobrium.

Their first home defeat of the season capped a topsy-turvy week for Liverpool. But a momentum for change is starting to build up on the ground and it will only be a matter of time before it is reflected back from the boardroom. Liverpool are already trailing in the championship and despite Evans' optimistic claim that Arsenal were in roughly the same position this time last year, there is little to suggest that this Liverpool side can mount a serious challenge to either the defending champions or Manchester United. Ince has become a symbol of an ailing club and Evans' vehement defence of his captain in midweek dealt another blow to the unquestioned moral authority Liverpool once enjoyed. Ince has been on the carpet so often this season he should be sponsored by Axminster, and he was lucky not to be booked again yesterday for a late lunge at Elliott. His time, at national and international level, must be running out.

Far from bringing a sense of tactical sophistication to Liverpool's play, Houllier's arrival has seemingly prompted few changes. If the defence is

his domain, the first two goals should require careful scrutiny. Houllier might want to know why Harper, all five feet eight inches of him, was allowed to rise unchallenged at the far post to head home a long and deep cross from Tony Dorigo after just six minutes. Or why, on the half hour, a lower, swifter, cross found Paulo Wanchope galloping in to thump home Derby's second also with his head. After Emile Heskey had terrified Liverpool's central defence with his power and pace last Saturday, Wanchope caused havoc this week, holding the ball up and giving his cohorts, Deon Burton and Harper, room to probe Liverpool's suspect flanks.

Liverpool did, indeed, have their moments. Unfortunately, most of them fell to Robbie Fowler, whose midweek histrionics would have been more potent had he managed to convert any one of half a dozen chances. Twice he beat the goalkeeper to a through ball only to clip an inviting cross into no-man's-land, once only a perfectly timed saving tackle by Elliott saved Derby. The one time Fowler did beat Russell Houllier in the first half, he hit the post with a header. When he did get a shot on target, a ferocious left-foot effort in the second half, Houllier saved brilliantly. Otherwise, Liverpool's build-up was far too predictable and Michael Owen's contribution far too futile to mount a period of coherent pressure.

"It was a game for heroes," Smith said. "I didn't even know the names of some of our substitutes." No one should be fooled. Just as he had bemused Manchester United by pitching in an extra forward, so he tried the same ambitious ploy at Anfield, playing three forwards and relying on the industry of Lars Bohinen and Daryll Fowell to shore up the midfield. Smith picked out Elliott's as the outstanding contribution.

"It was good to get the early break because it gave us something to work on," he said. A late goal fashioned by Manamann and converted from close range by Redknapp only heightened the sense of frustration at Anfield. Liverpool charged forward to produce a frantic finale, but Derby refused to wilt and, at times on the break, looked the more likely scorers. Wanchope's left foot drive whistled past the post in the dying minutes. "I can't fault the effort," added Evans. "It was the most disappointing result, not the most disappointing match," echoed Houllier. Tuesday's Worthington Cup tie against Tottenham has now taken on an apocalyptic hue. Liverpool cannot afford another season in the wasteland.



Arm's length: Derby's Horacio Carbonari (left) stretches a point in his battle with the Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler at Anfield yesterday

MARK THOMPSON/ALLSPORT

Festa rescues the nine men

BY ADAM SZRETER

Southampton	3
Monkous 61, Beresford 82, Osenstad 85	
Middlesbrough	3
Gascoigne 47, Lundekvam 66, Festa 92	
Attendance: 15,202	

tenstad seem certain to score but Curtis Fleming blocked his point blank effort on the line.

Middlesbrough were quick to retaliate. Andy Townsend, back on the ground where his league career began, latched on to Hamilton Ricard's pass and slid the ball past the advancing Southampton goalkeeper, Paul Jones, only to see it rebound off the inside of the post.

There were chances galore in the first half, with the two sets

of forwards very much in the ascendancy, but the game needed a goal; within two minutes of the restart Paul Gascoigne obliged. Ricard's thrusting run at the heart of the Southampton defence was halted by Monkous's crude challenge on the 18-yard line and up stepped Gascoigne to curl the resultant free-kick around the wall and beyond the despairing dive of Jones.

Southampton refused to let their heads drop and Osenstad brought the best out of Marlon Beresford with a rising shot on goal and it worked. "Coven-

try prevented us from playing and made us look poor. We need a few straight wins now to give us a rocket boost."

But with only two victories all season and with Roy of the Rovers, time is beginning to run out for both Blackburn and Hodgson.

hang on, Carlton Palmer punched a high ball into the area that Beresford and his defenders failed to deal with and substitute James Beattie poked the ball over the line.

Then three minutes later Le Tissier set Osenstad free on the right and the Norwegian drilled an accurate right-footed shot across Beresford and into the far corner for what looked the winner.

When Stamp received his marching orders it seemed to confirm that impression but two minutes into injury time poor old Lundekvam completed an afternoon of personal misery when he let Middlesbrough's Italian defender Gianluca Festa steal in to give Middlesbrough an unlikely point.

Whelan lays ghost of absent friend

BY PHIL ANDREWS

Blackburn Rovers	1
Sherwood 73	
Coventry City	2
Huckerby 54, Whelan 74	
Attendance: 23,779	

Huckerby twice came close in the first half, while Blackburn's strikers were rarely in the right place to benefit from some good approach work by their wide midfield players, the Damians Duff and Johnson, who were again the pick of a Rovers side struggling to achieve its potential.

Coventry grew in confidence as the game progressed and Gary McAllister, prompting from midfield, had been threatening to open up a Blackburn defence which looked fragile

once Darren Peacock had departed with an injury. It was a simple through ball from Philippe Clement which broke the deadlock. Huckerby latched on to it, took several strides towards the retreating defenders and struck the ball calmly past Tim Flowers' left hand.

Blackburn bounced back against the run of play when Tim Sherwood rose at the far post to head home Johnson's corner kick in the 73rd minute but, as often happens, the goal disturbed their concentration and within 60 seconds Coventry were deservedly in front again. Whelan was allowed to escape and outstripped the defenders to drive the ball into the roof of the net from 20 yards.

Gordon Strachan, the Coventry manager, said: "The front two were phenomenal

and Whelan was absolutely outstanding. When Dublin left, we had to tinker about with our system to get more strikes on goal and it worked."

Hodgson admitted: "Coventry prevented us from playing and made us look poor. We



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Into the Valley rode the tight brigade

THE MUTUAL admiration between clubs who have risen above their station to win a place in the upper reaches of the Premiership prevented yesterday's game at the Valley from taking wing.

The teams' qualities of determination, tenacity and spirit cancelled each other out, spoiling the spectacle but allowing each to stretch their recent unbeaten run in the league.

After coming successfully through some glamorous games in that period, this was back to

the nitty gritty for both sides, and one point apiece was about right, given the balance swing back Charlton's way in the second half after Leicester had threatened to repeat their victory in the Worthington Cup tie nine days earlier.

The absence of Tony Cottee, who scored both Leicester's goals that night, underlined how badly they need an extra striker. Martin O'Neill was forced to use Steve Walsh - a centre half starting for the first time since August - in a for-

midable physical partnership with Emile Heskey.

Since the equally resolute Eddie Youds and Carl Tiler were marking them, and Matt Elliott was also available as a third force at set pieces, it was no surprise that the dominant image of the afternoon was of a dozen players leaping for a high ball as David Elleray awarded a free kick for nudging or shoving.

It was tough on the fan who had travelled from Texas for the match. According to O'Neill

BY STEVE TONGUE

Charlton Athletic	0
Leicester City	0

Attendance: 20,021

what he saw was "a good old fashioned English game". This is not always a compliment.

Within 10 minutes both Leicester strikers had taken a mandatory count and soon afterwards Walsh and Tiler were

lectured for having a swing at each other off the ball. Paradoxically, Leicester's Theo Zagorakis was sent to the touchline to remove his jewellery while Muzzy Izzet received the first of five yellow cards for petulantly throwing the ball down.

For all the neat approach play by the men in midfield, the best chances predictably fell to the boys up front. Walsh produced a thumping header from Steve Guppy's disputed corner, which Mark Kinsella cleared off

the line. From the subsequent corner Elliott had his header saved by Sasa Ilic.

Charlton had another escape as Danny Mills cleared a cross straight at Izzet, the rebound bouncing straight back at him and, within 20 seconds of the restart, Heskey homing in as Tiler stumbled, chipped the wrong side of a post.

Charlton's best move and then best period followed. Steve Jones, brought on to try and disturb the visitors with his direct running in a 4-3-3 formation

headed down Chris Powell's cross for Clive Mendonca, searching for his first goal in eight games, to drive narrowly wide.

Leicester forced backwards for the first time, made discretion the better part of valour by withdrawing Walsh to defence. "I think he was relieved," O'Neill said.

They would still have won following his quick free kick if the substitute Stuart Wilson could have reached Heskey's low cross.

Dons in debt to Jess heroics

BY CALUM PHILIP

Aberdeen	2
Dunfermline	1

Attendance: 10,293

EOIN JESS proved his actions are equally as persuasive as his words, with two goals which rescued Aberdeen's tattered reputation.

With the knives being sharpened for his manager, Alex Miller, Jess had publicly declared that it was time for his team-mates to move out of the comfort zone to push the Dons out of the drop zone. And the forward was as good as his word, curling in a decisive right-foot strike with six minutes left to erase the shock which Jamie Squires' equaliser for Dunfermline had bestowed on Pittodrie just seconds earlier.

Aberdeen have been in the red in every sense recently. Regarded as one of the best clubs in Europe in the mid-Eighties under Alex Ferguson, the only figures anyone has been talking about this season have been negative ones.

Last month the club announced a record loss of £2.5m while on the pitch a bright start, which included a win over Celtic, has been submerged by a wretched run of 11 League games without a win to plunge them into second bottom place.

Inevitably, that has put Miller under increasing pressure and the general consensus was that if Aberdeen lost to the bottom club, Dunfermline, yesterday, he would be the fourth manager in six years to exit Pittodrie.

Much of the blame though, lies with Miller's overpaid, under-performing players, such as Mike Newell and Craig Hignett. Hignett is desperate to return to England after only four months at Aberdeen, because of family problems, but the former Middlesbrough player has failed to live up to his £2,000-a-week wages.

But it was another former Premiership salary, Jess, who halted the plunging interest in the Dons after just 60 seconds. The forward pounced after Newell's fine shot on the turn from 18 yards was only parried by the goalkeeper, Lee Butler, and Jess dived in for the rebound for his sixth goal of the season.

Hignett, possibly shamed by this, unveiled a rare moment of magic 10 minutes later with a 20-yard shot which crashed off the bar. Butler then noted for his error by denying Hignett with a wonderful tour past the post.

Dunfermline gradually came back into the game and Squires was unfortunate not to equalise before half time.

Such is Aberdeen's current insecurity, the pursuit of a second goal contained an almost frenetic, nervous quality. Robbie Winters should have buried a 61st minute shot past Butler after Newell's knock down but he rushed his effort and sent it over the bar.

Eight minutes later, Hignett showed more poise as he profited from Butler's charge out of the area in clear from the rampaging Winters. Hignett pounced on the loose ball and floated a delicate lob towards the empty goal but it just floated wide of the upright.

The price was only paid in the 83rd minute when Dunfermline equalised. Greg Shields delivered a fine cross which Squires ruthlessly turned past Jim Leighton.

Fragile Forest battered by Gayle

BY NORMAN FOX

Nottingham Forest	0
Wimbledon	1

Attendance: 21,362

PIERRE VAN HOOIJDONK, Nottingham Forest's wayward absentee who walked out at the end of last season saying the team was not good enough either for him or the Premiership, had a point. Nothing he saw yesterday on his return to the City Ground would have changed his view. On the other hand, little he did suggest that, in spite of his 34 goals last season, he is the answer to Forest's problems.

Van Hooijdonk's reinstatement elevated a comparatively mundane match to one that excited curiosity. His return after 12 weeks of self-imposed exile offered Forest the chance of an overnight improvement in their fragile goalscoring record - only two at home and six away. The question was whether his absence from competitive play since appearing for Holland against Croatia in the World Cup in July had left him with any value at all. All he proved yesterday was that he remained match fit.

If he needed encouragement, it was certainly lacking from Dave Bassett, the Forest manager, who welcomed him in his programme notes by observing: "I must admit that Pierre has amazed me by having the audacity not even to apologise to anyone at the football club. He has shown no

remorse whatsoever for his behaviour, which is regrettable to say the very least. I want to go on record as saying Nottingham Forest have done nothing to apologise for over this whole affair. Pierre is here to play football and I suggest he does just that."

Bassett mellowed after the game, saying Van Hooijdonk "got on with it and played quite well" and that if he performed at the same level he could continue in the team, but the Forest crowd gave the Dutchman a mixed reception. They were more appreciative when, within 50 seconds of the kick-off, he was seen enough to position himself inside the near post to meet, though scuffed, Marlon Harewood's grass-high centre at Neil Sullivan's feet. Although Andy Gray also forced Sullivan to stifle a long drive on the turn, the initial expectancy in the Forest crowd slowly turned to more familiar frustration and Wimbledon settled into their equal familiar pattern of feeding the big front-men with ammunition.



Industrial action: Pierre van Hooijdonk, returning to Forest colours after his one-man strike, takes on Chris Perry yesterday

BOB RATHBONE

Service to Van Hooijdonk and Harewood, Forest's front two - to call it a "partnership" would assume something that may not exist - was less persistent. So, after 23 minutes, Forest's frail teamwork and failure to subdue Wimbledon's main tactic cost them a goal - a good and typical one. Michael Hughes made space on the left, centred without hesitation and Marcus Gayle sledge-ham-

mered a header beyond Dave Beasant in Forest's goal.

The lesson was not taken to heart. Wimbledon continued to fly centres into the Forest penalty area, with Carl Leaburn climbing menacingly - only a long dive by Beasant stopped him capitalising on one accurate cross to his head from Gareth Ainsworth, who was making an impressive debut. At the opposite end, Harewood tamely

let Sullivan hock his only serious chance of the first half.

While Van Hooijdonk rarely gained, or was offered, hopeful possession, it was left to Chris Bart-Williams to make the best of Forest's few opportunities - and even he saw his best 'run end with Sullivan grasping his shot. When, at last, Van Hooijdonk was offered an inviting through-ball from Steve Stone, he crashed a point-

blank shot into the side-netting. Bassett may have noticed there was just a hint of remorse - a slight head of the head.

As Forest gradually raised some pace and dug deeper, so they became more vulnerable when Wimbledon did what they do best, counter-attack with power. In the 57th minute, Ainsworth again sped away, only for Gayle to waste the ensuing accurate centre by shoot-

ing high. But Forest's susceptibility was damning. Stone apart, none of the Forest side had the drive or control to create serious sustained pressure.

Whether Van Hooijdonk, who had only three shots, will merely play a few games to prove his fitness and then be off-loaded remains to be seen, but on this evidence his low opinion of his colleagues is unlikely to have been much altered.

In Wunderland

BY SIMON TURNBULL

Sunderland	3
Grimsby	1

Attendance: 40,070

SUNDERLAND REMAIN the untouchables of English football, for the time being at least. Peter Reid's return to Goodison Park on Wednesday night will present his team, and their unbeaten run, with a test of Premiership quality, albeit in the Worthington Cup. Yesterday, though, in front of 40,077 at the Stadium Of Light, Sunderland duly extended their best ever start to a season to a 22nd league and cup match without defeat. Not since Michael Gray trundled his penalty into the arms of Sasa Ilic at Wembley on 25 May have Sunderland tasted defeat, though it was a bitter pill they swallowed that afternoon.

Their upward mobility has remained steadfast thus far into their latest promotion campaign. Reid's team now stand five points clear of Ipswich in the First Division's pole position, having ultimately overcome Grimsby's more than worthy challenge with three

goals in the final 25 minutes yesterday - the first two by Martin Smith and the third by Niall Quinn. "I'm delighted with the result," Reid said. "Grimsby were very determined and very skilful."

They were indeed. And the Sunderland manager also had personnel problems to surmount, with Kevin Phillips and Lee Clark both still out of action. Daniele Dichio, Michael Gray and Nicky Summerbee on the injured list and Alex Rae in a clinic suffering from what a club spokesman has described as "stress and alcohol-related problems." Without any striking alternatives, Reid was obliged to play the less-than-fit

Quinn and Michael Bridges - it was hardly surprising that his patched-up team were all at sea at times against the Mariners.

Three times in the opening 10 minutes Thomas Sorensen came under serious threat and Sunderland's Danish goalkeeper was obliged to race out of his penalty area to halt Jack Lester with a clumsy challenge that drew yellow-carded admonition. Not until the half-hour mark did Sunderland pose any sort of a threat to Aidan Davison, an unseasoned trialist at Roker Park in his teenage days as a van driver-cum-Northern League goalkeeper with Spennymoor United.

Just as the natives were becoming restive, with 65 minutes on the clock, Smith broke the deadlock. The former England under-21 winger found the back of the Grimsby net with a crashing right-foot volley after Davison parried a point-blank shot by Quinn. Four



Smith: Two more goals

minutes later Smith rose to head in Allan Johnston's cross from the left. Sunderland's advantage was halved within a minute, Perry Groves beating Sorensen with a close range shot, the points were effectively secure nine minutes from time when Quinn turned to fire a curling shot past Davison.

It was league goal number 100 for the Irishman and a victory achieved, with the ailing Rae in mind. "I'm sure he'll be pleased," Reid said. "There is always spirit in the dressing room but when one of your mates is having problems you gang together for him."

Hughes eclipsed

BY JON CULLEY

West Bromwich Albion	1
Birmingham City	3

Attendance: 19,472

IT WAS the kind of build-up to guarantee Lee Hughes an afternoon of total anonymity. All week the talk had been of the 22-year-old former Kidderminster Harrier who has been the sensation of the Nationwide League, especially when his manager Dennis Smith reacted to a midweek hat-trick - which raised Hughes' goals tally to 18 in as many games - by slapping on a £10m price tag. It was no surprise, therefore, when he was completely overshadowed as Birmingham won this derby in a canter.

So well-matched was the Birmingham defence that the young tyro hardly got a look-in - his contribution was limited to one first-half shot and a free header in the second period directed straight at the Birmingham goalkeeper. You could not blame him, though - Albion were simply awful, making a red-faced mockery of Smith's claim that they are worthy of a top-six position.

Hughes' thunder was stolen by Peter Ndlovu. What had begun as a bad week for the Zimbabwean international ended splendidly with his seventh and eighth goals of the season. Ndlovu was sent off against Huddersfield last weekend, branded a diver by referee Rob Styles. The accusation deeply upset the player, but after five days in which Birmingham's owner, David Sullivan, threatened legal action against the Football League, the official changed his mind.

Ndlovu expressed his relief at the Hawthorns by cashing in on two of the three moments of abject defending that cost Albion the game, first leaping

between Shaun Murphy and Andy McDermott to head his side into a fifth-minute lead from Jon McCarthy's cross, then collecting Mario Bortolazzi's giveaway before cutting inside Murphy and jinking past Matt Carroo to fire his second 11 minutes before the interval.

In between, Dele Adebola had taken advantage of a horrible missed clearance by McDermott to increase the visitors' lead to 2-0 after 12 minutes.

Albion almost gave themselves hope before half-time when a Bortolazzi free-kick forced Birmingham keeper Kevin Poole to make a fingertip save, but it was not until 10 minutes from time that small consolation came from a near-post header from Carroo.

Trevor Francis, Birmingham's manager, said: "I've spent the week talking about Lee Hughes, but I always thought that, if we could keep him quiet, it would be my strikers who would make the headlines."

Lee quick to unleash Wolves Venables settles old scores

ROUND-UP

BY GEOFF BROWN

MANAGERS? WHO needs them. Not First Division Wolverhampton Wanderers, who parted company with Mark McGhee and by way of commemoration thrashed Bristol City 6-1 at Ashton Gate. A good start for caretaker Colin Lee, then. "I would have settled for a single goal victory," the ungrateful Lee said.

Star of the Wolves performance was David Connolly, who scored four times after Carl Hutchings had put the West Country side ahead and Guy Whittingham, on loan to Wolves from Sheffield Wednesday, equalised. Carl Robinson added the sixth 11 minutes from time, which means Bristol have conceded 11 goals in

two games under new coach Benny Lennartsson.

"I blame myself for the size of the defeat," he admitted. "because at 3-1 down I made some substitutions which did not help the team. That was poor coaching."

Weeks of turmoil at Oxford United - collapsed takeover talks, the players' wages unpaid, a players' strike threatened, wages paid, strike averted, talks resumed - reached their logical conclusion at Watford. They arrived with their usual yellow shirts, forgetting they were the Hornets' colours too, had to

wear Watford's away strip and lost 2-0.

Unlike his players, Malcolm Shotton has not been paid this month. "My wife is not happy about it and I will have to draw the line somewhere. We're down to the bare bones [he meant the team not the fridge chez Shotton] and I can't fault the players for effort."

Look out, the sky is falling. Queen's Park Rangers have won a second consecutive match. Their 2-0 success means victims Bolton Wanderers have won only once in their last five games. Kevin Gallen put them ahead after four minutes with a 25-yard shot. Mike Sheron put the outcome beyond doubt on the hour. "To be honest they

can all do with getting fitter," Gerry Francis, the team Rangers manager explained.

After a 2-2 draw at Bramall Lane, Sheffield United are unbeaten in seven games, Tranmere Rovers ditto in eight. Huddersfield Town and Ipswich Town also drew 2-2, at the McAlpine Stadium. David Johnson's 89th minute strike salvaging a point for the second-placed East Anglians.

In the Second Division, a 1-1 draw at Northampton lifted Wycombe off the bottom for the first time since August and the log jam at the top of the Third - six teams were level at the start - was halved when only Rotherham, Scunthorpe and Cambridge managed to win.

CRYSTAL PALACE'S assistant manager Terry Fenwick did his utmost to rile his former colleagues at Portsmouth by saying before this match that theirs was a small-time club. That could have been seen as sour grapes, as he was sacked by Portsmouth last season as they headed for relegation. But on this evidence Fenwick was right.

However, his comments served only to heighten an antipathy between the two sides that led to a police presence that was double its normal size. The ill-feeling was started by Terry Venables, the Palace manager, leaving Portsmouth in January, to be followed swiftly by Fenwick. Venables had been supposed to bring glory to

BY CONRAD LEACH

Crystal Palace	4
Portsmouth	1

Attendance: 20,188

Portsmouth - instead, he left under such a cloud that Pompey fans greeted him yesterday with a series of provocative chants.

But for all the presence of the fearsome police force that surrounded Pompey's large contingent of fans, it was really Portsmouth's back four who needed the reinforced security. Venables himself declared that the fans' anger did not

bother him: "I don't worry about that. I've been around long enough not to."

If Portsmouth had won, they would have leapfrogged Palace to the giddy heights of mid-table in the First Division, but it was hardly on the cards once Craig Moore arrived at the far post in the sixth minute to head home. It looked even less likely once left-back Fitzroy Simpson was sent off for use of the elbow on Dean Austin four minutes before half-time.

Yet soon after Portsmouth equalised, as John Aloisi pounced on a fumble by Fraser Digby to slot home, and an upset seemed possible. But Aloisi missed a golden chance to put his side ahead five min-

utes after the break and the ragged Portsmouth defence then crumbled.

It took only seven more minutes for Palace to go ahead, when Matt Jansen's shot took a deflection off Andy Thomson, and the result was beyond doubt after 64 minutes, when Jansen fed Hayden Mullins inside the area to turn and shoot past Alan Knight. Craig Foster completed the rout with a low, 25-yard drive nine minutes from time.

Undaunted by such a defeat, Portsmouth's vociferous fans stuck around afterwards and it required manager Alan Ball, prompted by the police, to have a word with the faithful to persuade them to go home.

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Champions' League: Arsenal manager refuses to pay silly prices as United profit from strength in depth

Wenger plays game of sanity fair

NICK
TOWNSEND

YOU have to admire his nerve. Or rather, the fact that Arsène Wenger is betraying no signs that he is losing his. As a man who, in all senses, has turned Arsenal into the culture club, the manager is no doubt familiar with Rudyard Kipling's oft-repeated verse, "If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you". For once, it is perfectly apt.

On Friday, he was the embodiment of sang-froid, as all about him, commentators and pundits, panicked on his behalf like a battalion of Corporal Joneses. Spend, spend, spend, they cautioned him, as though he is some latter-day Viv Nicholson. Kluivert, Shevchenko, Rehrov, Uncle Tomas Coblerv and all, they implore him. But he just sat there with that slightly pained smile, like a long-suffering medical professor who has been told by a student that the spleen belongs in the chest cavity.

"I'm getting a bit tired of hearing I need another striker at Highbury to make sure we compete with the best," reflected the Frenchman. "Against Kiev, we scored a perfectly good second goal, yet conceded three. Surely that suggests there is something wrong at the back rather than the front."

He added, disarmingly, "I am not prepared to pay silly prices for players but would prefer to concentrate on bringing kids through. One of the problems of buying big-name players is that it damages the young players you already have. Kiev want sums like £12m and £20m for their strikers and that is crazy to me. I will never join in this mad market."

Few will not fail to applaud his words. Least of all Alex Ferguson, who has done precisely that at Old Trafford, while constantly supplementing the home-grown talent with expensive acquisitions. That is something that, thus far, Wenger has refused to do, his most extravagant purchase being Marc Overmars at £4.5m. Some value that. In the long-term context it is a commendable philosophy. But can even Arsène the Assured brazen this one out satisfactorily? One can only hope so, for the sanity of a game afflicted by an inflationary spiral, although it he will not strike quietly and astutely if one of his quarries becomes available at the right



Striking contrast: Andy Cole, once a Gunner, celebrates his Champions' League goal as Arsenal's Christopher Reh comes a cropper in Kiev

price and with personal demands that conform to his view of Arsenal as "a socialist club". As he puts it: "All my players are paid very handsomely. No one here earns a lot more than anybody else. We are all on the same level."

Wenger has been roundly

condemned for selling Ian Wright, just turned 35, yet in Nicolas Anelka he possesses a 19-year-old whose Premiership tally of six is the same as the chat-show host turned Hammer, and who can only improve. In attack, Wenger's principal problem concerns Dennis

Bergkamp who, for all the concern last week about "burn-out" and a recurring hamstring injury, can boast a thoroughly consistent record of appearances and goalscoring since emerging at Ajax in 1986. The lack of a recuperative period after the World Cup may well

have blunted his natural goalscoring instincts temporarily, but Wenger is the right man to nurture him through a testing period.

For a team supposedly deficient in resources in depth, it appears to have been neglected by his volunteer advisers that

Arsenal start today's game against Everton only a point adrift of Manchester United, and with their Champions' League ambitions still potent.

"If only" is an all-too-familiar, and futile cry in football, but Arsenal did not so much impair their group E chances last

Wednesday when, given their litany of absences, they performed with credit, but by conceding late goals in Lens and at home to Kiev.

Indeed, if you survey the remaining fixtures, in their respective groups, of United and Arsenal, which teams would

you rather face? Barcelona and Bayern Munich, or Lens and Panathinaikos? Nevertheless, the euphoria is understandable at Old Trafford, though his five years of European Cup experience will have warned Alex Ferguson against premature evaluation. The absence of Ryan Giggs is the one nagging doubt in advance of two games against teams who will give his men rather more to ponder than Brondby have.

But at least he has come to abundance. No doubt, if he succeeds in his almost obsessive quest for the trophy that has eluded him, his £28m summer shopping expedition, reaping his defence, midfield and forward line, will be used to assault Wenger, accused of lack of foresight.

Yet even Ferguson cannot have imagined that the integration of Dwight Yorke into his side would have also brought so much increased productivity to Andy Cole's game. In truth, you suspect that Yorke would flourish in any team, such is his ebullience and positional sense. Whenever he scores, it always evokes a conversation with the Aston Villa chairman, Doug Ellis, after an FA Council meeting a few years ago. Never mind FA policy, he was more concerned with wading lyrical about a young man that his then manager Graham Taylor had bought after a close-season tour of the West Indies. Ellis could barely contain his elation at a prospect he described as "the most exciting young player" he'd ever seen. You can only nod politely and go on your way, although you could tell he was "Deadly" serious.

As for Cole, maybe he had got it wrong about him all along. Maybe not, and he is thriving on an association with Yorke that will peter out when the Tobagan is missing. But, more than most, the player is fuelled by confidence, which the Old Trafford service station is pumping into him constantly at present.

Captain Roy Keane, whose presence after a frustrating season recovering from injury is another responsible for United's sense of optimism, believes that the fear factor is doing the trick. "The lads up front are playing very well. Maybe that's because they know that if they don't do the business they will be out of the team." Or perhaps not. Maybe, it is precisely because Cole, a somewhat introspective character, is virtually assured of a place that the goals are beginning to flow once more. In fact, the Highbury old boy, who faces another former team in Newcastle today, is just the kind of player that Arsenal could do with right now.

Only it's as well not to mention it to Arsène Wenger.



DAVID ASHDOWN AND ALEX LIVESY/ALLSPORT

Gullit fishing in foreign waters



Gullit: Slow progress

THE LAST time Ruud Gullit embarked on a managerial mission at Old Trafford he was blessed with such an endorsement of riches he had the striking assets of Gianluca Vialli and Thore Andre Flo alongside him on the bench. It will be rather different this afternoon. Ten weeks into his new management job, Gullit has yet to acquire the new faces Newcastle United clearly need to make up the ground they have lost since the false dawn of their 5-0 mauling of Manchester United on Tyneside 25 months ago.

The dealocked Dutchman has been deadlocked on the transfer front since his arrival at St James' Park. He still has the squad he inherited from Kenny Dalglish - big on numbers but short on quality, though now, of course, minus Steve Watson and Stéphane Guivarc'h. Gullit saw evidence of the Magpies' plummeting stock on day one, a 4-1 home defeat against Liverpool, and again five weeks ago, in a 3-0 loss at Highbury. He pledged after the slump to "go through the team with a battering ram" but, in the absence of rebuilding material, the demolition of Kenny's crew has yet to materialise.

"Of course we're not where we want to be," Gullit said after training on Friday, "but I think we've done well in the last 10 weeks. I'm ambitious to do even better. And to do even bet-

Simon Turnbull finds Newcastle's plans are currently deadlocked

ter we need to sign some important players so the quality of the side will improve. But I'm not panicking. I'm not going to buy somebody just for the sake of it. Whoever I buy will have to improve the team.

"Yes, I've got the money. But I want the right players. If the worst comes to the worst and we don't get anyone then I will be happy to continue with the same squad. There is a lot of fishing going on at the moment but the bait is not right."

Gullit did bite at the chance of landing Dion Dublin but was never going to tempt the Stratfordian away from the Midlands once Aston Villa dangled their £5.75m hook. He has spread his net overseas - making unsuccessful offers to Milan for Christian Ziege and to Deportivo La Coruña for Jerome Boninissel, another left wing-back - and his wanted list is also believed to include Ulf Kirsten of Bayer Leverkusen, Ivan Zamorano of Internazionale and Michael Mols of Utrecht, all strikers, and Milan's defender Giuseppe Cardone.

"For me, there is no frustration," Gullit insisted. "You have to build slowly - one step

at a time. It was the same situation at Chelsea. Not quite. Twelve weeks into his first season as Chelsea manager, Gullit had a team good enough to win at Old Trafford. He would have savoured another 3-1 success there last season too, had Ole Gunnar Solskjaer not salvaged a fortuitous late point from a bruising contest in which Gullit's side played with the sparkle of potential champions. Gullit has yet to lose as a manager at Old Trafford and he has clearly won the respect of the man against whom he will be pitting his professional wits again this afternoon.

When Ken Bates decided to make Gullit a 35-year-old Chelsea pensioner, Alex Ferguson invited him to oversee informally Manchester United's training at The Cliff towards the end of last season. "I couldn't go because I was on a coaching course in Holland," Gullit said, "but it was a nice gesture, very nice. I really admire Alex Ferguson, the way he does things and what he has achieved."

What Ferguson's team have achieved in their last two matches, overcoming Everton and Brondby with a combined scoreline of 9-1, would not appear to augur well for Gullit's side this afternoon. Newcastle, in their last two Premiership fixtures, have lost 2-0 at Tottenham and 3-0 at home to West Ham, though Gullit - like the seething Toon Army - has dis-

missed the most recent reverse as an aberration directly attributable to Graham Poll. "There was no way we would have lost that game other than because of the referee's decisions," he said. "We played well. We will go to Old Trafford with confidence from that."

And Newcastle will need all the confidence they can muster in the so-called Theatre of Dreams. They did beat Sheffield United in the FA Cup semi-final played at Old Trafford in April but the home of the Red Devils has long been a cauldron of Georgie nightmares. Just once in 48 years have Newcastle beaten Manchester United away from home. That was in February 1972, the week after Newcastle's FA Cup humiliation at Hereford. John Tudor and Stuart Barrowclough scored the goals in a 2-0 triumph against a line-up which featured the names Best, Law, Charlton and Kidd.

"It's nothing to do with me," Gullit said, with an Irish grin, when his attention was drawn to the 26 years of Toon Army hurt. "You can't live in history. You've got to build for the future." For Newcastle and their new manager, though, the team-building has yet to begin.

Guivarc'h given fresh connection



Guivarc'h: Sold on Rangers

STEPHANE GUIVARC'H did not look like the man who had just got out of jail. If the Frenchman was happy to be at Ibrox, the emotion was struggling to break out on his face.

Maybe being stuck in the gilded cage that was St James' Park had robbed the striker of his appreciation of freedom, although with a price tag of £3.5m the escape was hardly Scott free. Yet, on a sunny, Friday morning in Glasgow, the day after Rangers had dealt a sickening blow to German pride by removing their last remaining team from the UEFA Cup, the penny had finally dropped for Guivarc'h, as perhaps it will for others around Europe.

The player who had uttered such an emphatic "non" when Rangers made two previous attempts to sign him, finally embraced them. What helped to convince the man who helped France win the World Cup four months ago was sitting in the Ibrox stands on Thursday as Dick Advocaat's side prevailed over Bayer Leverkusen to reach the third round.

The Guivarc'h rejections, of course, had been based on the assumption that playing in Scottish football was the equivalent to serving a prison sentence: Devil's Island, if you like. That was why he snubbed the Ibrox club, even after being flown in by the chairman David Murray's private jet last March to look over the set-up, and insisted his

Calum Philip argues Rangers are more attractive in the Advocaat era

old club take Newcastle's offer of £3.5m when Rangers had pledged to give Auxerre nearly £6m, otherwise he would sit where he was until he became a free agent in 1999.

However, it was Newcastle that became a prison, and Ruud Gullit who was his jailer. So, Rangers suddenly began to look more attractive than they did a few months ago. "The game against Leverkusen didn't affect my decision," reflected Guivarc'h. "I had already given David Murray my word. But I was surprised at how well they did in Germany to win the first leg and this is the kind of club I want to play for."

Presumably, Newcastle came into that category too. The only problem was that Gullit would not play him and the striker didn't want to sit around on the bench picking up his wages. Now, although Guivarc'h will be ineligible for the next round against Parma, he at least can see tangible proof he is at a club with substance.

"I know that for Rangers the most important thing is to win the title, but it is also important for them to be successful in Europe. When I was at Auxerre,

we competed in the Champions' League and reached the semi-finals of the UEFA Cup, and that is what every footballer wants to do with his career."

That Rangers could even have been considered for such elevated company would have been ridiculous a few months ago. The Glasgow club's record in Europe prompted only sniggering, not admiration. But Advocaat's vanquished adversary, Christophe Dalm, believes the Dutchman is quickly getting things right at Ibrox. "Rangers are still developing," said the Bayer Leverkusen coach, "but I hope they go all the way in the final. They could. They have a great counter-attacking game and the support they have in Glasgow makes them formidable at home too."

Guivarc'h may have to wait his turn before getting his place in Rangers' domestic line-up. He will probably only be on the bench for today's Premier League trip to St Johnstone, but the Frenchman should not worry: given Advocaat's admiration for him, Clydebank is unlikely to be a carbon copy of Tyneside.

"We had several attempts to get Stéphane," admits Advocaat. "But now he's here, and that is fine. He is an excellent striker who scores goals. He was always my No 1 target and he is now a Rangers player."

Guivarc'h may find it tough to displace Jonathan Johansson, who killed off the Germans with

his fifth goal in the competition, and the rejuvenated Rod Wallace. But at least, the Frenchman will be given a fair crack of the whip. "I have nothing to prove to Ruud Gullit," he said icily. "I never played long enough at Newcastle to get a chance. If I have anything to prove it is only to myself."

Seeking to distance himself from his earlier scathing assessment of Scottish football, Guivarc'h would say only: "For French players, the Premiership is the place to be. There are so many of us there. Maybe it is a better level of football than Scotland - I don't know."

"I was close to signing for Rangers when I came here last March, but it is good that I have Lionel Charbonnier [Rangers' French goalkeeper] here now. We played together for years at Auxerre and it is good to have a friend off the pitch."

That remains to be seen, but at least Advocaat is blending his multi-national talents into a side capable of making Europe talk. The Italian defender Sergio Porrini, who won the European Cup with Juventus, declared: "We are growing all the time, and beating the third best team in the Bundesliga will tell people we are a good team."

JP 11/10/98



Market forces or forces? Pierre van Hooijdonk - 'you don't go on strike like that'; the De Boer twins - 'they treated their club's supporters with disdain'; and Dion Dublin - 'a doer and not the kind of guy who would flounce around'

The real boss-man ruling

The scales of influence have swung powerfully from the clubs to the players. By Nick Townsend

SO, THE Romany-like, fastidious Dion Dublin has finally encamped at Aston Villa, the Premiership leaders and, we are told, conveniently near to his Stratford-upon-Avon home. Presumably, he will be able to keep up his visits to the Royal Shakespeare Company's current production.

Whatever his rationale for spurning Leeds and Blackburn and joining John Gregory in a deal that will earn him £5m over five and a half years, he has set our top clubs a merry trail over the last two weeks, not to mention his previous manager, Gordon Strachan.

Dublin, the former Manchester United striker, failed to turn up for one Coventry game, had to train alone, and was fined £40,000. Just another typical week in football's fantasy-land where those who still pay to view live under the real sky can only shake their heads sadly at the apparent avaricious tawdriness

of it all. And, lest we should forget, there are also Pierre van Hooijdonk and the De Boer twins of Ajax, who are perceived to have treated their clubs' supporters with disdain.

In the week when it was revealed that far more viewers would rather watch bread bake (in fairness, it was Delia Smith doing the baking) than Liverpool come to the boil and grasp victory from Valencia in a frenetic Uefa finale, could there be a hint that some players' desperate need for the dough, allied to performances that are frequently far from appealing, might actually be alienating even the faithful? A phrase involving golden, goose and eggs comes readily to mind, and that's got nothing to do with Delia.

According to Jon Smith,

who together with his brother Phil runs the Wembley-based First Artist agency which handles the contractual negotiations of no fewer than 62 players, including Darren Huckerby, Mark Bosnich and England's Les Ferdinand, the scales of influence have swung significantly away from the clubs to the players. Once regarded almost like serfs of feudal landlords, they now have clout like never before. No wonder there are 107 Fifa-licensed football agents, "because everybody thinks it's a licence to print money, although only seven of us actually do any business".

"Quite rightly the players, who are the major participants in the games, are at last receiving the rewards they should be, like in any other industry,"

insists Smith, who describes the football side of his business as the "cash cow". "You have only to look across the water to the States. Because it is an industry that is run as much from the heart as from the head and it is in the public forum it is different to most others. It's no longer the player being told what to do. It's not player power; it's the maximisation of your own potential. Everyone does it."

But he adds: "The power has definitely swung to our side of the table, and I believe we should wield that power responsibly. If we milk it irresponsibly we could be mortally wounding a large part of this new industry. Because, make no mistake, football is no longer a sport but a business, albeit an infant one which has only really

become serious since the advent of the Premier League. We're still all finding our feet."

However, he believes that the concept of player power is a distortion of the facts. "It's such an easy tabloid line and it's not correct. What has Dion Dublin done wrong, other than insist that Coventry abide by his contract [which contained a clause stating that he could talk to any club that bid over £5m]?" asks Smith. "He hasn't particularly jumped at Villa for purely monetary reasons. But even if he had, what's so bad about that? Unfortunately, we live in England, where we don't like success. We don't like people driving round in Rolls-Royces; we'd rather scratch them, which I find rather sad."

He adds: "People who do a decent job should be paid well,

and the going rate for a top footballer is £1m a year. Dublin is a doer, not the kind of guy who'd miss training or flounce around the pitch, so good luck to him."

Van Hooijdonk, however, comes into a category that most agents with integrity wouldn't handle. "He's totally wrong because he's in contract," says Smith. "He should honour it or leave. You don't go on strike. That's pathetic. Similarly, you've got the De Boer twins, who've got a bloody good contract from Ajax, but they want to break it because they see riches elsewhere. They see the interest from Arsenal, but a court says 'no, you're wrong.'"

Dublin's contract was nothing out of the ordinary. "You can't do things that used to be tax efficient, like clubs buying

houses. But any top player is going to have a clause like that. All sorts of clauses are creeping in. We were involved in a deal the other day which fell through because the player wanted an 'assist' bonus of £250 as well as a goal bonus, which I don't like anyway because it doesn't help team spirit. But can you imagine the rows in the dressing room afterwards over whether a player gave an 'assist' with a goal or not? Well, I made the run and took the defender with me, which gave you the opportunity to come through the gap. I want my £250 quid... It would be that kind of thing."

The dilemma remains: are players actually worth £20,000 a week, or in Brian Laudrup's case a reputed £50,000? Market forces decree that they are.

Fans who earn less than half that a year may beg to differ. "Is Mike Tyson worth £15m a fight?" says Smith. "Generally speaking, if players aren't worth it, clubs get rid of them. It sounds like easy money, but it's very competitive. The strange thing is that nobody seems to question whether TV presenters, pop stars, newscasters, who all get paid well, deserve it. Only footballers' wages get questioned. Why? Well, probably because football is the life and soul of our nation and it's developed from a traditional working-class sport."

"I look back on Highbury in the Fifties and I look back with fondness, even though my memories probably include the hoke behind passing down the back of my leg. We see kids of 18 today earning more in a year than our parents earned in a lifetime and it's difficult to reconcile that. But tradition can actually get in the way of progress."

Laudrup: Moral is in the morale

The plight of Brian is not one to gloat over. By Steve Tongue

ONE OF the glossy advertisements in FC Copenhagen's 56-page match programme, for Umbro Sports, became obsolete early on Friday afternoon. Next to a photograph of a Chelsea shirt - yours for only £49 (adults) or £44 (boys) - was the caption "Brian's Klub". Not any longer.

Following the biggest transfer in the brief but eventful history of Denmark's most ambitious club, Brian is coming home to the Danish capital to play for the team he knocked out of the European Cup-Winners' Cup on Thursday night with a swooping header.

Local supporters, who applauded him even after that goal, bear no grudge. Some Chelsea followers, on the other hand, appear to have adopted Alan Sugar's attitude to Jürgen Klinsmann and would not wash their car with a shirt bearing the name Laudrup.

The sense of betrayal by a player walking out on the club after only five months and 11 games is not shared, however, by a Chelsea chairman who would normally be expected to agree fully with their insistence that blue is the only colour. It is a complex saga, this one, perhaps more morality tale than Danish fairy story; the moral being that if there are greater considerations than contracts for the modern footballer, there can still be more to his life than money.

Furthermore, as players - and managers - come and go for increasingly short periods, even chairmen as devoted to their cause as Ken Bates (not a one-club man either, don't forget) are prepared to adapt to the new realities.

Flemming Ostergaard, the

president of FC Copenhagen, played on all those factors in completing the coup for the club he took over 15 months ago. As a long-standing friend of the Laudrup family, he also knew that Brian's heart, and that of his wife, Mette, were in the Danish capital rather than England when he joined Chelsea from Rangers last summer.

"We had a chance to sign him then - we were very near," Ostergaard said in his plush office at the splendid Parken Stadium, where the four steeply banked stands offer a British-style ambience even for matches with the Danish Super League's modest attendance figures: Copenhagen average 8,000 but had 26,000 for the derby with co-tenants Brøndby recently.

Strong family ties meant that there was always a chance of Laudrup finishing his career back home. Both he and his older brother Michael, probably the most gifted players ever produced in Denmark, began with Brøndby, a club that another Laudrup helped transform.

Brian related recently: "As a player, my father, Finn, got them from the Second Division to the Premier Division. Then my brother's transfer to Lazio gave Brøndby a lot to build on, £400,000 or £500,000, which was a lot in those days."

Brian eventually followed Michael to Italy. By the time he returned to Copenhagen with Milan for a European Cup-tie in 1993, there was a new footballing force there. Two of the old-established clubs, KB and B 93, had merged, to such good effect that the new FC Copenhagen, known locally as FCK, won the championship in their first season. Milan



Exit line: Laudrup is substituted on Thursday night

drubbed them 6-0 in front of 34,000 but with one exception they have played in Europe every season since and become seriously ambitious.

Ostergaard, originally associated with one of the club's sponsors, became president in July last year, overseeing the conversion into a public company a year ago. Ask him if Brøndby, trounced twice in the Champions' League by Manchester United, are still Denmark's biggest club and he answers with one word: "Was."

Originally valued at £2m, Danish crowns (approximately £8.2m) FCK attracted 7,000 new shareholders, selling out within six hours. The latest valuation - which will soar again with Laudrup's arrival - was 400m crowns.

The luck of the draw in the Cup-Winners' Cup then brought together Chelsea and FCK, and kindred spirits in Ostergaard and the Stamford Bridge hierarchy. "We talked about many things regarding the two matches, and it was natural as they had a top-class

Danish player that the subject of Brian came up," he said.

"Ken Bates and Colin Hutchinson, and the human qualities they showed to Brian, were fantastic. If he was playing for an Italian club, the management wouldn't have looked at it in the human way Ken and Colin have. Brian and his family appreciate that." Although Finn Laudrup recently took up a position in the club's commercial department, Ostergaard denies any suggestion that there will automatically be jobs for the boys one day. "Brian has signed for two and a half years as a player," he said. "I don't think you can decide you want to be X or Y before you finish playing."

"What we're really happy about is that we now have a player who only five months ago was selected in the World XI and is still at the top. Now our ambition is to be Danish champions and play a major role in Europe."

Amending an advert in the programme seems a small price to pay.

Leeds' class struggle

David O'Leary knows he needs more quality to compete. By Simon Turnbull

IT WAS European night in Leeds on Tuesday and Eric Cantona was in action. Unfortunately for Leeds United, the one-time king of the Elland Road Kop was strutting his stuff far enough from their madly cheering crowd - posing as the Due de Foix in Elizabeth, top of the bill at the Warner Village cinema complex in Kirkstall Road. It was nevertheless an apt reminder of those historic times when Leeds last ruled the football land. The championship-winning team that Howard Wilkinson built started to fall apart the night they were knocked out of the European Cup by Rangers. Cantona scored a late consolation in front of the Kop in that 2-1 defeat. It was his last home game for Leeds.

The ground Leeds United have lost in the six years since that big European night was glaringly evident on Tuesday. For all the "oohs" and "aahs" when Lee Sharpe and Lee Bowyer ventured within scoring range, they were not remotely in the same class as Roma. When the public-address system finished serenading the discerning Elland Road audience with operatic arias, it was the Romans who provided the culture. They may have achieved their Uefa Cup second-round

conquest by the narrowest of margins, courtesy of Marco Delvecchio's first-leg goal in the Stadio Olimpico, but even when reduced to 10 men for the second half they made their hosts dance to the tune of their precisely orchestrated play.

When they struck an off-key note - Aldair stabbing an attempted right-wing pass out of play in the 63rd minute - it stood out as worthy of note. Leeds, by contrast, could hardly string together a pair of accurate passes. One wondered what the Leeds players of yore would have made of it: the pass masters who mauled Manchester United 5-1 in February 1972, when Eddie Gray nutmegged George Best, and then famously tormented Southampton with a keep-ball exhibition and a 7-0 scoreline in their next match. Gray, of course, was on the touchline on Tuesday night, as assistant to David O'Leary in the new managerial regime at Elland Road. In the dressing room afterwards he might have drawn attention to pages 54 and 55 in the latest edition of Leeds Leeds. The "Eddie Gray Skill School" feature just happens to be devoted to passing.

Also to be found in the club magazine, somewhat cheekily, is a "George Graham toilet bowl sticker", with an accompanying invitation to "enjoy intimate moments exposing George to your fat backside". On Tuesday night it was the shortcomings of the team Graham left behind that were exposed. As Leeds, after a flattering flurry in the opening quarter-of-an-hour, laboured to contain let alone break down their opponents, it was an equally difficult struggle to nominate natural selections for a team capable of mounting a serious title challenge. Beyond Nigel Martyn, there were no obvious choices, though Lucas Radebe and Bruno Ribeiro were notably absent from a team including five players aged 21 or under. O'Leary has inherited a team short not just of experience but of quality too. In their last five home matches, they have scored just one goal - and that was a deflected Harry Kewell shot against Bradford.

It is not difficult to understand why Graham - his eyes on the glint of trophies as well as the bright lights of London - chose to depart and why O'Leary sought transfer-spending guarantees before agreeing to replace him. Asked after Tuesday's game whether he had made an offer for the £10m-rated Delvecchio, Leeds' manager of two weeks replied:

"I think our team cost about £13m all-in but if Roma wanted to leave behind players like him I wouldn't complain."

Roma's coach, Zdenek Zeman, could afford the luxury of keeping Cafu on the bench for 86 minutes on Tuesday. O'Leary can afford to spend some £12m on new recruits but has been struggling to attract players on the domestic - let alone international - front, having failed to persuade Dion Dublin to move to Elland Road and to meet Barnsley's asking price for Ashley Ward. He has also been attempting to lure David Batty, though apparently not Cantona and the other nine members of the championship-winning class of '92.

"I'm just looking to strengthen the team all round," O'Leary said. "If you want to do well in competitions you need a big, quality squad and that's what we need. We haven't got the money of the Arsenal or the Chelsea but if I can add to what we've got here already we'll be a good little side."

There was a time when Leeds were a good big side but these days they have reason to be grateful for such small mercies as the home game they face this afternoon. The opposition comes from a city of seven hills - from Sheffield, not Rome.

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Sex and golf: local rules should apply

I hesitate to blame the Victorians because they are the founding fathers of the games most of the world now play and we owe them our eternal gratitude.

Football, rugby, cricket, tennis, golf... what they didn't invent they developed and the fact that the rules and constitutions they drew up in the latter half of the 1800s are largely those in force today is a tribute to their organisational thoroughness.

Unfortunately, and I am sure unwittingly, they left behind a few timebombs and the one ticking loudest at the moment is strategically placed under British golf. Not the golf played by the likes of Colin Montgomerie and Nick Faldo, but the more rustic version hacked out by the hundreds of thousands of us who play at private clubs throughout the country.

What the Victorians did, these so-called fierce patriarchy, was to adopt an attitude to the ladies that was out at all in keeping with their reputation for ruling with rods of iron and which is now ready to explode.

The pattern for forming a golf club towards the end of the last cen-

tury, which was when many were created, was for a group of enthusiastic men to get together and beg, borrow or buy a few likely fields. They hired a professional who laid out a course which they knocked into shape. Then they built a rudimentary clubhouse and completed the hard work of pioneering the game as we know it today.

Since women have always disliked the thought of men enjoying themselves without them, it wasn't long before they wanted to try this new sport. Can we join? they asked. That was the moment when the course of golfing history bung in the balance. And our forefathers blew it. Perhaps, it was asking too much of them to possess the vision to shape the future of club golf as well as have the prescience to foresee the pitfalls but all they had to do was to take up the stern posture for which they were famed.

Sorry girls, they should have said, but we've only got a small clubhouse, the toilet arrangements are a bit primitive and the course is crowded. Why don't you go and form your own club?

It's easy to talk with hindsight but had they done that we'd have twice

as many golf courses and few of the problems that now beset the game. Alternatively, and I admit this wouldn't have been in character or in context with the age, they could have welcomed them as equal members and the uniformity of opportunity now desired between men and women golfers would have been in place from the start.

But they didn't. They took the easiest, and worst, course by offering them a deal that would have seemed quite sensible at the time. The women would form their own section and play on the course when the men were at work during the week and keep clear when the men were free at the weekends.

Thus was set the template for the formation of golf clubs for decades to come.

Once established, the pattern has so far proved very difficult to change. In order to understand why this should be it is necessary to understand the nature of golf clubs and that seems to be beyond most non-golfers, especially the Equal Opportunities Commission who on Thursday launched a policy of positive discrimination in favour of women aimed at life in general but



PETER CORRIGAN

covering certain aspects of sport.

In an age crammed with unfortunate wonders where the next equal opportunity is coming from. I am not sure if the EOC have their priorities right but I do agree with their drive for female equality in sport, especially in schools, and if you were starting any sports club today you would automatically begin with equal status.

The problem comes when you attempt to introduce it into clubs that have been run very successfully and contentedly for many decades on decidedly unequal terms as the recent MCC conversion showed. The situation in golf is far more complex than the MCC's because of a large green area called a course upon which playing space is at a premium. Golf is one of the most under-

resourced games and most clubs have as many members as they can possibly accommodate and also have long waiting lists.

It is the weekends when the congestion is worse, especially when the men's competitions are held. They are usually well over-subscribed, particularly in the short days of winter.

And, for historic reasons previously explained, it is the weekend when playing time for women members is restricted and that's when they want the equality to click in. They can only do so if men surrender course time that has previously been solely theirs and this is the fundamental issue at stake. Men argue that the women knew the rules before they joined but that doesn't disguise the fact that times have changed and more women golfers work than ever before and the weekend is their only time to play, too.

My mother club, Glamorganshire, is 108 years old and is one of about 1,400 facing this problem. It is proving a worryingly divisive issue. It is an oft neglected point that the women control their own section of a club, play off different tees

with separate stroke indices and answer to their own national golf union. That doesn't mean that they don't contribute to the club as a whole but they are a self-sufficient unit within the club.

As far as I know, they have no specific complaints about the way we run the Glamorganshire which is a very successful and flourishing club that now has over 1,100 members of all categories. As a past captain I'm aware of the hard work and great expense, out of our own pockets, that has gone to making it so. Whereas I believe that ladies have a justifiable case for equality I can't disregard the fears of many men that it might be gained at the expense of the club's future health. That view may well contain a strain of misogyny, which I certainly don't share, but, like it or not, golf has been a game hitherto controlled and financed by men.

We can hardly blame the ladies for not having played a bigger part in building the game up to its present strength if we haven't let them have a vote but the fact remains that we may have been guilty of discrimination but certainly not of exploitation. They pay two thirds of

the male subscription (£267 compared to £365) and, this is not a criticism, make a negligible contribution to what we make from the bar. Last year our net profits were way in excess of the total subscriptions. And, far from being deprived, I guess that the average women member plays more golf than the average male member.

Golf clubs have a regrettable history of discrimination, as various races and religions would testify. Forty years ago tradesmen and retailers would not have been welcome. Slowly, and it has been slow, the barriers have been pulled down and that facing the ladies is one of the last.

But, as impressive as the EOC's case is, I suggest the Government hold back from trying to change this situation through strict edict. There is men's golf and there is women's golf and we have been fated to share the same facilities. Every club steeped in this tradition is going to have to work out a future fair to everyone. It won't be easy but these are our clubs and this is our problem and we claim the right to solve it ourselves.

The England coach is standing up to his critics and standing up for his principles. By Nick Townsend

Hoddle defends the way he defends

INTERVIEW
GLENN HODDLE

Oh, to be surrounded by stars, and held in legendary esteem by his country. There must be times when England coach Glenn Hoddle wished he enjoyed the approval rating of American senator Glenn instead of being forced to acknowledge that his role is becoming, as he puts it, "the impossible job".

It was perhaps inevitable, as he looks towards the year 2000 and the odyssey which stretches out with uncertainty before him, that Glenn Hoddle should turn to the question of his more vicious detractors. "There's a certain small number and whatever I do - even if we win the next six games on the trot - I know that if we lose the seventh the knives will come out for me," he says resignedly.

They could be unleashed sooner than that. Even armed with a renegotiated, improved contract from the FA and its implicit demonstration of support, the current incumbent is aware that England's failure, resoundingly to bounce the Czechs out of Wembley on Wednesday week will be accompanied by a renewed clamour for the entire Hoddle mission to be aborted forthwith, even though he is adamant that this friendly, followed by another against France in February, is more a voyage of discovery before the return to Euro 2000 qualification in March.

However, he is ready to thrust out that square chin defiantly against onslaught from pundits, columnists and the public, should the result or performance provide grounds for further censure. "The only interest I have in beating the Czech Republic is that it builds up confidence for the Poland and Sweden games," he explains. "We could have two magnificent performances from the players because the pressure's not on, but then we freeze against Poland. I don't really want that scenario, to be honest. I want to find out if the players are ready for it in March. You might come unstuck about the result, but you've found something out about the players."

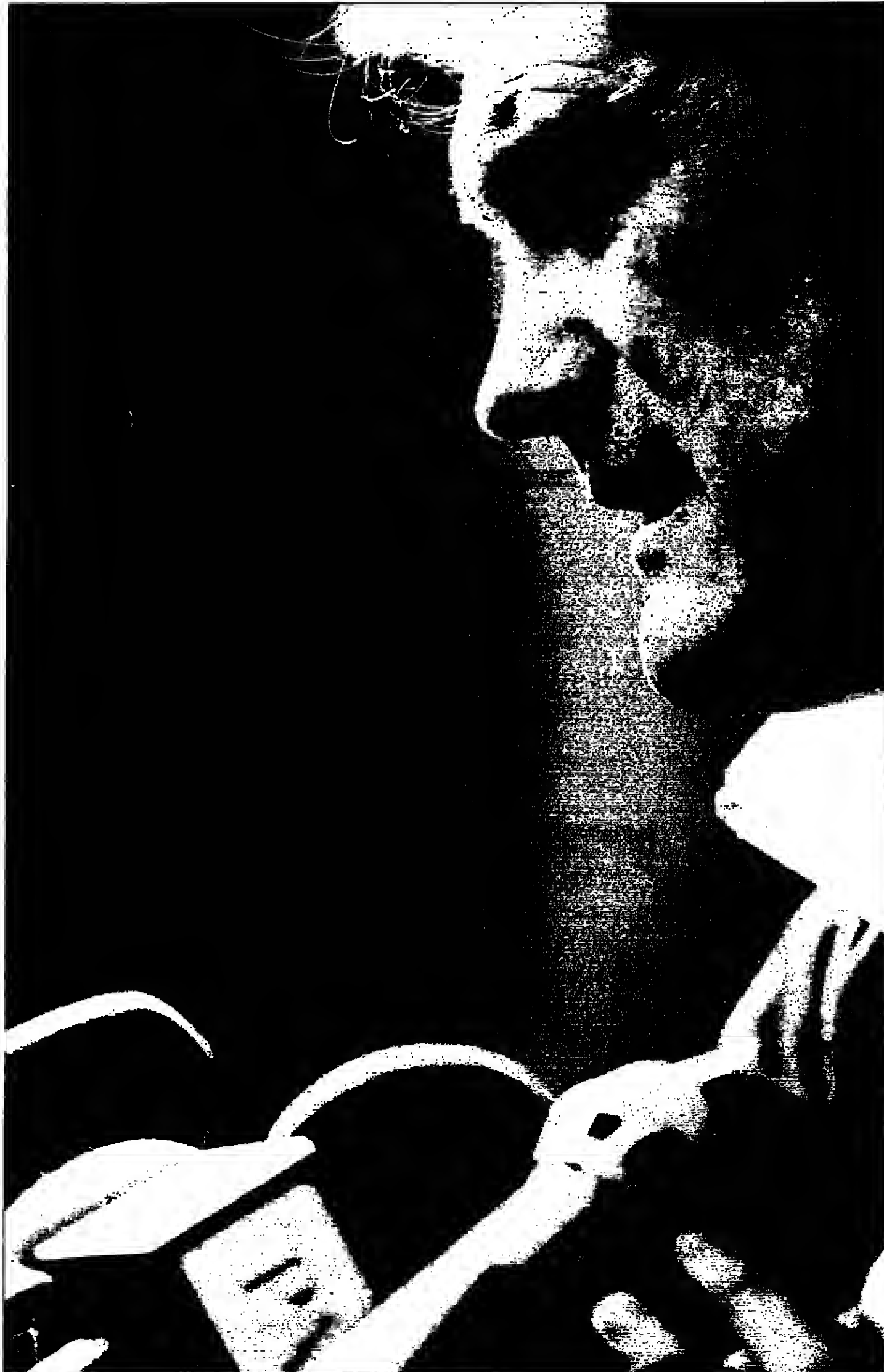
Absences through injury and the suspension of Paul Ince will give Hoddle ample opportunity to examine the capabilities of graduates from the Under-21 team. "There's a good possibility of that," he agrees. "Although we're not going to throw in six or seven new players just for

the sake of it." The names of West Ham's Frank Lampard, scorer from midfield in England's last three Under-21 games, the impressive Lee Hoodrie of Aston Villa and the Leicester striker Emile Heskey, who has added improved technique to his phenomenal power, come immediately to mind.

Whether a suitable depth of talent will be available to Hoddle, or his successors, in years to come, is quite another matter. It was as Chelsea player-manager that he first declared his antipathy to "teams fielding eight or nine foreigners". His fears have been realised, ironically enough at Stamford Bridge, although he stresses: "The arrival of the Zolas and the Bergkamps and other great players has helped our football and brought our players on. The problem we might be having in the next two or three years is too many average foreigners coming in because they're cheaper rather than they're better and stopping young English players coming through. I'm scared that a lot of our young talent is going to be completely swallowed up. It's a shame that there isn't a ceiling of, say, a maximum of four foreigners."

Since the beginning of the qualifying campaign and with it the future over his World Cup diary, Hoddle appears to have subtly transformed his demeanour. Hitherto, he has seemed somewhat distant, a man perceived as impervious to adverse comment and who failed to accept personal responsibility for England's ills. Now the indications are that Hoddle intends to "come out" over his beliefs.

Hence, his response to those who chant the mantra "fall back four" is unequivocal. "Say it loud, I'm a back-three man and I'm proud." Well, actually he doesn't. Not in so many words. That would be a mite too evangelistic, so for the moment he restricts himself to a simple message of intent. "If people feel 4-4-2 is the way forward in international football, they'll have to wait until I'm out of a job," he says sharply. "I haven't gone out and said too much about it, but perhaps now's the



The perfectionist: "Because my own standards are so high, I criticise myself behind the scenes more than perhaps I should" MIKE BERTON/EMPHICS

time to come out and explain - if people want to listen."

Space may or may not be the final frontier, but utilising it on the flanks is crucial to Hoddle's strategy, and that is why he will not relent on his view that the way forward must remain through wing-backs and not along "the straight lines", as he describes it, of 4-4-2. "I played in that system as an international and I would have loved to have performed in the formation we use now."

Very well but what, you ask, about today's personnel - Tony

Adams among them - who find the system alien to their own and their club's style? "You say that, but you tell me what team's on top of the Premiership at the moment, and what system do they play?"

Fine, Aston Villa do, but shouldn't a better litmus test be Arsenal and Manchester United? "I agree with you to a certain degree in the Premiership. But I would say that it hasn't worked in Europe for many years." Hoddle continues: "Nobody criticised me when we qualified for the World Cup when

I decided that the best shape for us going forward was three men at the back and stretching the pitch widthwise, which gives you options. What we've done is defeated in a 4-4-2, but we've changed our shape when we've got the ball. They tell me that we got more crosses in than any other team in France 98."

Further self-justification comes from what he achieved at Stamford Bridge three years ago. "I had a team at Chelsea, when I didn't have millions being thrown my way and we also had the three-foreigner rule. It

meant we had youngsters like Anthony Barnes, Darren Barnard and Neil Shipperley in European games, together with an old fella, the player-manager, who had to play as well. We had a very difficult task but we played that shape and we went to the semi-final of the Cup-Winners' Cup and very nearly got to the final. I don't mean that to the detriment of those players - but there's my answer. That convinced me it was right for Europe."

He adds: "I just feel that certain teams that play what we call a

The problem we might have is too many average foreigners coming in because they're cheaper rather than better. I'm scared that a lot of our young talent is going to be swallowed up. It's a shame there isn't a ceiling'

4-4-2, the French and others which have all been thrown at me, they haven't really played it, or not as rigid as the English way."

Being able to field such versatile defenders as Rio Ferdinand, Sol Campbell and Gareth Southgate could suggest that the 4-4-2 traditionalists are misguided. But at least, unlike some coaches, there is nothing to indicate that Hoddle will deviate from his faith. Even the doubts over qualification following the failure to defeat Sweden and Bulgaria. Reports have intimated that he would be sacked in that eventuality. But surely he would walk first?

"It would depend on all the circumstances," he insists. "It was the same with the World Cup. If we'd got hammered 5-0 by Argentina then I'd have had to look at the situation. In fact, a lot of people abroad in football that I respect have said 'you could have got to the final' and that puts a different complexion on it. Similarly, if we didn't qualify for the European Championships you'd have to look at why. It might have been because of one vital game with several of our most influential players out."

Ultimately, self-belief and more than a degree of arrogance, integral to his character since a player, will be his saviour - or prove his downfall. Hoddle claims, and the evidence supports it, that he has not been chastened by those who vilify him. "No manager in the world gets good results all the time and you know there's people always ready to have a sojap. In fact I'm my own biggest critic, I really am. Because my own standards are so high, I criticise myself behind the scenes more than perhaps I should, according to people who know me well."

But he adds: "It's going to be no different for anybody else whether I come out of this job in two years, three years, four years, whatever. We've seen it before with my predecessors and it's getting worse. It's going to be an impossible job. No-one's going to want to take it. But as long it does not affect people close to me I'll continue to give 100 per cent. That's all you can do in life. Once I feel the criticism was stopping me doing that and really got ridiculous, I'd give up anyway."



Guarded welcome: Only 1,511 turned up for the action in Dublin but officials are not alarmed as they wait for the drip-drip of activity to create a space for a new game in a crowded market place

BEN DUFFY

The craic at a new code

Rugby league feels it is going places, even if Dubliners were slow to catch on. By Dave Hadfield

IF DUBLIN is ever granted a Super League franchise and needs a coach, Shaun Edwards would like to be considered. Although Ireland's first full rugby league international on home soil ended in a brave, late 24-22 defeat by France – and isn't there something traditionally Irish about that? – then, in the most decorated player in the game, they had one of the hermes of a memorable night.

Anyone wondering whether it was really worthwhile trying to import yet another code of football into a country where three are already clamouring for attention should have witnessed the green fuses the occasion lit in Edwards. "I felt more and more Irish as the game went on," he said, fist clamped around a pint of Guinness afterwards.

One benefit of Jack Charlton's *modus operandi* in one of those other codes is that nobody looks too critically any more at degrees of sporting Irishness. Edwards qualifies via his maternal grandmother, Kitty Collins, who came from "somewhere out on the West Coast, a lot of years ago". As far as he knows, that does not make him any kin to Ireland's former world champion, Steve Collins, but rugby league has brought the two Celtic Warriors together and Collins was there at Tolka Park on Wednesday night.

"I'm a Shaun Edwards fan. I watch him playing for the London Broncos, so I had to be here tonight," said Collins, who believes that the code can find its niche in Ireland, even if it has a fight ahead. "The biggest problem it will have here is the rugby union. It's such a clique and they're terrified of this, because it's so much a better game."

"I never wanted to play it myself. Can you imagine running into some-

one like Shaun on the field?" Brian Carney shares those sentiments about the game's appeal. He discovered it for the first time in May, but on Wednesday he was a home-grown hero to rival Edwards. If Edwards has played around 1,000 games in his life, Carney, from Co Wicklow – "Valley Mount. Make sure you get that in or they'll kill me" – has experienced a mere handful.

On Wednesday night, however, he was a revelation on the Irish left wing, showing equal measures of pace and bravery that suggested that, after dalliances with Gaelic football and rugby union, he has found the set of rules that suit him.

"I was playing a bit of rugby union at Lansdowne and Brian Corrigan, who is involved down there and set up the Irish Rugby League, asked me to have a go in a student tournament," he said, after having his eyebrow stitched back together in a makeshift surgery in Shelbourne Football Club's offices. "I love the game. For a winger, there's no comparison with rugby union; more ball, harder hitting, faster..."

"It's the biggest thrill of my life. These guys like Martin Edwards – er, Shaun Edwards – and Martin Crompton that you see on TV and I finish up playing alongside them. I've brought a load of people tonight from where I live. They've never seen a game of rugby league in their lives, but I know for a fact that they'll have loved it."

Carney, a 22-year-old business graduate, plays for the Dublin Blues, one of four clubs playing in the South Conference of the Ireland Rugby League, based around Dublin; there is an equivalent structure centred around Belfast in the North. A full-time development officer, Nigel Johnston, has also set up a thriving

FIRST NIGHT RUGBY LEAGUE IN IRELAND

school network, reflected in the mini-league games before the main match and at half-time. But Carney has the ability to leave all this behind. He has already trained with the Bradford Bulls. "I never got to play a game for Bradford, but it was great to see how a Super League club works and train with players like Tevita Vaikona," he said.

Now, a combination of the Irish captain and coach, Crompton and

Steve O'Neill, is likely to see him offered a chance at Salford. "He's a terrific prospect," Crompton said. "And you know the best thing about him? He's tough, very tough – and that's the starting point. I get the impression that there is a lot of that sort of toughness around here and that's why there is such good material for rugby league."

Your man from the Dublin Blues overhears. "We've got more where

he came from," he promises. It is the encouragement of those grass roots that the Rugby Football League's chief executive, Neil Tunncliffe, sees as the object of the exercise. By contrast with the regime that went before him, Tunncliffe steadfastly declined to beat up Wednesday night into something it was not or to make claims that it could not sustain.

There was, for instance, the novel policy of announcing the genuine crowd of 1,511 – kept down on a chilly Dublin night by Manchester United on television – rather than inflating it into something more impressive. "What would be the point? Rugby league has done too much of that – parachuting into places and then pulling out because it's not an instant commercial success. We're in this for the long haul and it's all about supporting the work that Nigel Johnston has done. There were 1,500 here tonight and a lot of those were kids who are involved in rugby league. For them, it was a great occasion."

The gradualist philosophy has already achieved one breakthrough. One designated development area in the North-east now has an infrastructure of amateur and junior rugby league that has made the entry of Gateshead Thunder into Super League next year feasible.

Two other target areas, Dublin and Glasgow, have international fixtures as part of the triangular tournament with France. The game is steadily putting down roots, but the world is inevitably less interested in that than in headlines promising "Super League club for Dublin". That is an ambition, says Tunncliffe, "but there is no firm proposal, no consortium in place and no finance."

You might conclude from a crowd

of 1,511 that there is not all that much interest either, but the administration is prepared to give it time for the drip-drip of activity and publicity to hollow out a space for a new game in an already crowded market place. At this early stage, there is a low-level hum of recognition, with mentions in the major newspapers and on radio. They set Sky Sports and BBC1 in Ireland and, although Corrigan was exceptional in getting the bug so badly that he travelled over to Wigan every weekend the way the masses do to Old Trafford, you can say "rugby league" in a pub in Dublin and attract vague expressions of approval. "I thought the crowd was fantastic," Barrie McDermott, the Leeds prop, said. "There weren't that many of them, but the noise was unbelievable. There was a lot of enthusiasm there."

McDermott and his fellow Super League professionals rather give the lie to the notion that the only thing they are concerned about is the club that pays their wages. The Anglo-Irish contingent coped happily with having to travel by ferry, because Stena Line came on board as sponsors, paying for their own refreshments, because Guinness didn't, and even with O'Neill's motivational Dubliners' tapes on the team bus.

But, if there was an element of end-of-season jaunt about it, Edwards and company played it on the pitch like a Test match against Australia. It was well into the fourth round of the black stuff before they stopped reproaching themselves for losing. It was then that the compensations kicked in. "I'm not going home until Sunday," said Edwards, although for him and his team-mates, Dublin was feeling more and more like home itself.

Novel look at the ring cycle

BOOK REVIEW

UNLICENSED

BY JON HOTTEN

As a novel, *Unlicensed* – *Random Notes from Boxing's Underbelly* by Jon Hotten (Mainstream, paperback £9.99) reads well enough to entertain for two or three hours. Unfortunately, it's not a novel. Ah, an exposed then? A scarring, scintillating indictment of an edge of the law, fringe way of life: an exploration of a pocket of society harder and more corrupt than anything "above ground"? Well, no.

Then, what on earth do we have here? The back-cover blurb claims Hotten has "journeyed into the margins of contemporary Britain to strip this world bare". The cover hype concludes with the grand announcement that we are about to be confronted by a story which is "unflinchingly honest about this secret underside of the fight game".

Oh, really. Then how is the reader supposed to equate this unflinching honesty with the tame admission in the introduction: "Some of the names of the people have been changed, the order of events has been altered and some characters are amalgamations of two or more people". Worst, we are asked to believe Hotten has witnessed some of the toughest, most brutal men in the world in blood-curdling matches, beyond the prying eyes of the police and miles from the relatively ordered world governed by the British Boxing Board of Control.

To anyone who has watched licensed, world-class boxing, this is laughable. If the protagonists are so lethal, why do they fight over four two-minute rounds with 14oz pillows for gloves? Those are Hotten's details, not mine. Licensed professional title fights are held over 12 three-minute rounds, with either six- or eight-ounce gloves. The assumption must be that Hotten's supposed hard men are some way short of professional class. The prime case is his central figure, John Barnwell, originally from Coventry and now living in south London. John Barnwell is not his real name, of course. Or perhaps it is. Maybe he's nine person, or two rolled together.

Whichever, he's interesting enough. Apart from being an elderly unlicensed fighter, who balances a love for working out in the gym with a taste for Guinness, he claims to be an ex-member of the 1960s chart band "The Ivy League". Barnwell manages a doorman with a reputation for mayhem, recorded here as "Billy Heaney", who also answers, when he speaks at all, to the monicker of "The Galway Bull".

Hotten slides outside the mysterious unlicensed world a few times, most entertainingly to the second, infamous Mike Tyson-Evander Holyfield fight in Las Vegas; and to the Birmingham gym of maverick fight figure Norman Nobbs, whose stable of willing unfashionable pros is labelled, with self-deprecating honesty "Losers Limited".

I know Nobbs well, and Hotten does him proud. I was also at Tyson-Holyfield II, and again he captures this nightmarish occasion effectively, including a good portrait of promoter Don King in full flow. However, his limited knowledge causes problems again when he reports the end of the fight in round four. It was round three.

One other character's name has not been changed: Roy "Pretty Boy" Shaw, a star of the unlicensed circuit in the 1970s, along with the late Lennox McLean. Hotten saw these men on film. I did, too, and he's right: their fights were vile explosions of violence that had little to do with boxing. Shaw has long disappeared from the scene, but Hotten does well to track him down to his home in Essex, and produce an intriguing interview. That was one of the high spots of a flawed read. In perspective, no. Fun, yes.

BOB MEE

Sleep talkers drift gently through the comfort zone

When the Tories arranged themselves on IKEA arm-chairs at their annual conference last month, the spectacle was fairly familiar. But what was it about that over-deliberate set and earnest front man which rang a bell? Monday night provided the answer. Of course! William Hague must have been trying to model himself on John Major in *On Side* (BBC1).

You can hardly blame him, since Inverdale has so many things which Hague wants and needs – self-assurance, professionalism, and popularity. But when the country's biggest bunch of losers seem to be aping your style, it is probably time to try something new, rather than asking guests to carry on using a sofa which, if it was indeed purchased at IKEA, was probably called Plönker.

Still, it looked comfortable enough. In fact, to judge by the way Franck Leboeuf and Iwan Thomas settled themselves in, the settee was almost as soft as most of the questions. Leboeuf, for instance, could easily have been asked why he appeared to be wearing two shirts, with collars, buttons and all, one over the other. Or better still, why he seems to commit at least one defensive howler in every match he plays. Now that would have been worth hearing.

Instead, there was the predictable series of "how did it feel when...?" queries which even relative newcomers like Thomas can answer in their sleep. No one expects Inverdale to set about his guests with a verbal cricket bat, but as *Clive Anderson* (BBC1) demonstrated lat-

er in the week, there is another way. He managed to ask David Ginola about his uncertain role at Tottenham now that George Graham is in charge, and the blame which some French fans still attach to him for their country's failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup.

It can be done, if the interviewer is up to it, and the shame of it is that until recently at least, Inverdale certainly was. Part of the problem may have been that the guests on Monday's opening show were just too – well, nice. But the Inverdale who used to make driving home almost tolerable during his days on Radio 5 Live is now far too reverential. Perhaps he has spent too much time covering wet Wimbledon, exhausting his well of questions to keep minor celebrities talking while they

SPORT ON TV



GREG WOOD

wait for the covers to come off. Whatever the reason, the supply seems to be running dry, which is a pity for him, the BBC, and everyone else who always reckoned him to be the next great sports anchorman in waiting.

Then again, the BBC is rapidly running out of sports to anchor, especially after a week of European football which finished with a 2-0

scoreline in Channel 5's favour. Aston Villa and Leeds conspired between them to leave a big hole in the schedules, although not before David O'Leary had given one of the season's more unexpected post-match interviews.

O'Leary was naturally feeling a bit down after watching his side suffer what can only be described as a 0-0 thrashing, but the sudden lowering of his horizons just a couple of weeks into his new job was still a little extreme.

Leeds, apparently, have "the makings of a good little club", though not one that would dream of matching "the likes of Arsenal or Chelsea". Whatever it was that O'Leary was doing during the protracted "will-he-won't-he" negotiations with Peter Ridsdale, it clearly

didn't include reading his job description.

A manager of the opposite vintage, Tommy Docherry, shared his reminiscences with Garth Crooks in *Match Of The Day* (BBC2), which was buried so deep within the daytime schedules, surrounded on all sides by game shows and imported tat, that it probably passed most working football fans by. Perhaps the programmers reckoned that it would appeal only to veterans of the days of Sir Stanley Matthews and Tom Finney, who were among the other subjects last week. If so, the series – which continues this week – has been woefully undersold.

Crooks is quickly becoming the exception to prove Barker's Law, which states that former sportsmen and women make lousy interview-

ers. Even he could afford to take it easy when it came to Docherry, though, since if ever there was an interviewee for Bonfire Night, it is surely him. Crooks duly lit the fuse and retired to a safe distance, as The Doc recalled his encounters with Terry Venables (he didn't like him), Bob Stokoe (he didn't like him, either) and the English in general (likes them now, but used to hate them).

Docherry got particularly agitated when it came to the subject of playing for your country – the ultimate honour, he felt, for which "they shouldn't" pay you, you should "pay them". You could only pause and wonder whether, by some impossibly happy co-incidence, Brian Lara might have chosen just that moment to switch on the telly in his hotel room at Heathrow.

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'I don't find it daunting. All I can ask is that people judge me on what I do, not on what Dad achieved'

A new chip off the old big 'ead



RONALD ATKIN

BESIDE the River Trent, some 15 miles upstream from where his father used to walk on the later, Nigel Clough has taken commendably brave step of his own.

Nigel is the new player-manager ("more manager than player," he says) of Burton Albion, the Dr Martens League club. The comparisons with Brian Clough, his two League championships, two European cups and a forbiddingly successful career are inevitable but Nigel insists: "I'm looking head, not over my shoulder. The fact that I was taking on a job Dad did so well never crossed my mind."

"He casts a big shadow in other people's minds more than my own. He's been my Dad for 32 years now, so you get used to it and, anyway, there was similar speculation when I started as a player."

"My getting this job has created quite a bit of interest, though 99 per cent of the people still want to talk about him. It's understandable and I don't mind. I'm more interested in getting publicity and possible sponsors for Burton Albion than the personal part of it, anyway."

In looks and temperament, Nigel much more closely resembles his mother, Barbara, as he readily acknowledges, though there is more to it than that. "I have also made a conscious effort over the years not to be like him. That way I didn't get compared to him too often. Not to be like him was one of the easier parts of life with Dad."

"But I have always been tremendously proud of what he achieved in football and, given is track record as a manager, here is bound to be something thrown at me whatever I achieve from now on. That's not something I find daunting. All



Small beginnings: Nigel Clough walks tall in the humble surroundings of Eton Park as the Burton Albion manager prepares for an FA Cup date with King's College

RON ATKIN

I can ask is that people judge me on what I do, not on what he achieved."

"I'm not overly concerned about keeping the family name going in managership. It might be that I only spend a couple of years here, fail miserably and never get another job in football. Then again, I might have a bit of success and maybe go on. You need a bit of luck along the way."

Luck has not figured prominently in Nigel's football life

since he separated from Nottingham Forest and Brian Clough when the club were relegated in 1993. "My contract was up, so I thought it was now or never and I decided it was time to go." Liverpool were keen to buy and Nigel was happy to sign for Graeme Souness. As ever, competition for places was keen at Anfield and when he found his first-team appearances limited he moved on to Manchester City in January 1996. "Alan Ball was the

major reason I signed for them because I had a lot of respect for him and had worked with him when I played for England under Graham Taylor."

"Unfortunately, six months later, he had left. After him came Asa Hartford, Steve Coppell, Phil Neal, then Frank Clark and Joe Royle. I even went to Sheffield Wednesday on loan and played a couple of games under David Pleat but he left the club a few weeks later. With that sort of thing hap-

pening, you get paranoid after a while. At some point I would have liked to have gone back to Forest when things weren't working out but that didn't happen. Maybe with hindsight I should have stayed at Liverpool and battled it out there."

"It was very depressing at City. When you have been used to 10 years as a first-team regular and you can't even get into a side that is struggling, you begin to have all sorts of doubts. You start trying to analyse what's gone wrong, what you're doing differently, and that tends to send you even more round the bend. Once you start thinking about the things that came

naturally on the pitch it's downhill from there."

Clough's misery was deepened by long-term injury problems with his heels, which have prevented him playing for the last six months. The house he had bought in Knutsford as a base was sold and he returned to the home he had kept on in Duffield, across a Derbyshire dale from his parents' residence in Quarndon, with his wife, Margaret, and son William, now six months old.

Six weeks ago he read in the local paper that Burton had parted company with their manager, John Barton. "I thought it might not be a bad place to go so I talked it over

with a few people, including my Dad. I thought he might say 'Hang on, see if you can get a youth team coach or a reserve coach job in the league'. But he was very positive and said there was no harm in it at all, that it would be a great place to start."

So an amicable parting was arranged with Manchester City, where Nigel still had 10 months of his contract left, and as a symbolic gesture he then sold the Mercedes which was part of his signing-on deal at City. "I suppose I was saying cheerio to the days of a highly-paid professional and all that. Now I am 15 minutes' drive from work in a smaller car and the improvement in my lifestyle is worth a

lot. Neil Warnock started at Burton as a manager, Peter Taylor was here too. I think it's a good way to learn the ropes, get a grounding and a good feel for the job. You will find out if you are any good at it because the principles are the same here as they are anywhere. You have to get the best out of the lads you've got. We have everything here that a league club has, just on a smaller scale."

Burton's trim Eton Park stadium, painted in the club colours of bright yellow and black, has a capacity of 6,000. The club is debt-free, ground improvements are under way and there is an air of optimism and progress about the place. "They do lovely mushy peas here on match days as well," said Nigel.

There were three clean sheets and two wins to greet the new manager and the club are through to this Saturday's first round proper of the FA Cup, in which they are away to King's College. Clough starts a three-year contract in charge of a 50-strong part-time squad that puts out a first team, reserve team and youth side.

But the realities of life at this level were brought home when Burton travelled to Morpeth in the FA Cup fourth qualifying round last Saturday. The coach left at 8am without the reserve goalkeeper because he could not get off work until 10.

Nigel has recruited Gary Crosby, a former Forest teammate, as his assistant - the Peter Taylor to his Brian Clough, some would say. Clough and Taylor got their start small-time at Hartlepool, so the partnership of Clough and Crosby should feel right at home.

Clough senior, whose football involvement tends to be through a large TV screen in his living room these days, has promised to go to see how Nigel is getting on. "I spoke to Dad about it last week and when things calm down a bit he will sneak in the back entrance one day and watch a game."

"My brother Simon has already been with his little lad, Stephen. He's nine now and has been going to football for five years. When the ball comes near him in the stand he wants to try and grab it. He came over the barrier four or five times in one game."

Clearly, another Clough prodigy in the making.

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Flawed captain faces cost of being caustic

Norman Fox argues that Liverpool's abrasive leader needs class assistance

SUGGESTIONS that first among the critics of Paul Ince's continuing bad behaviour should be his employers. Liverpool, not only fly in the face of reality but miss the main point: the reason why the club bought him in the first place and why they are unlikely to curb his boorishness either on the field or in the dressing room.

Ince was obtained by Liverpool from Internazionale for £4.2m and by Inter from Manchester United for £7m and by United from West Ham for £1.8m largely because of his caustic nature, not in spite of it. To understand why Liverpool particularly felt they needed him requires nothing more than a glance at the rest of the present team and the under-achieving club he joined last year.

In the years since the club dominated domestic and European football, they have often been lacking in that physical persuasiveness that in the past Tommy Smith, then Graeme Souness, supplied in full, intimidating measure. Before the arrival of Ince, only Steve McMahon had come near to providing Liverpool's pretty, neat passing team with the core of ruthless ball-winning which was so important to the success of the Bill Shankly and Bob Paisley sides.

Souness, McMahon and Ince are first-out-of-the-trenches men, though McMahon and Souness undoubtedly benefited from the fact that in the past so many referees had the "pat on the backside" attitude to discipline. While Ince deserves all the disciplining he gets, his similar pugnacity has referees fingering the yellow card as soon as his name appears on the team-sheet.

The particular problem Liverpool have brought on themselves is making him captain. Captaincy assumes a strong sense of responsibility. Ince interprets that responsibility as a licence to intervene when others would stand back, as he did yet again in Valencia on Tuesday. The club appointed him for the simple reason that no one else could be such an inspiring bully. Judged purely as a constructive midfielder player, he has probably always been over-priced, but that was not Liverpool's concern. Their subsequent fault, and one that even the astute Gérard Houllier seems not to have recognised, was the need to provide Ince with a truly imaginative midfield partner of world class.

When Ince comes over as arrogant and defiant in the face of criticism, with his "that's what I'm paid for" attitude, he may

fall far below the standards schoolteachers would expect of a player who is supposed to be an icon for youth, but he is saying what he expects his employees want to hear. Having bought him mainly for his belligerent leadership, the chances of Liverpool asking him to make humble apologies for his actions are, to say the least, remote. Additionally, as captain, he seems to believe that any trouble involving other members of the team immediately becomes his problem. Misconceived, no doubt, but that is exactly the way he sees the duties of a captain.

For Roy Evans and England's Glenn Hoddle, Ince's value as a player is something that those of us who are less than sold on his ability possibly fail to appreciate. Hoddle explained: "When he goes forward with the ball, you know

that things are going to happen. When he gets into the penalty area the opponents never know what is going to happen. He makes goals and gets penalties. Gets penalties! Again, why should Ince stop doing something that is against the spirit of the game when the England coach seems to be encouraging a cheap form of advantage?"

Ince himself says Hoddle's interpretation of his talent for "getting things going" confirms his own opinion of himself. "I got that at Manchester United - determination, aggressiveness. I believe in myself as a leader - every team has got to have a leader." He fostered that during his spell in Italy which began unpromisingly and saw him brave much venomous racial abuse. Because he won over the Italian crowds after being critical of their intolerance, other black players benefited from an improved atmosphere.

To understand why colleagues and coaches value him so highly, you also need to know how much his hollering, gesticulating and physical involvement rubs off on younger, would-be leaders. Nicky Butt, at United, freely admits that his own toughness (which also sometimes becomes irresponsible) came about largely because he felt the full impact of Ince's motivation.

Ince accepts that a difficult childhood left him with a chip on his shoulder which made it difficult for him to accept authority. Over the years he has spoken of how much calmer and self-disciplined he thinks he has become. But would any of his clubs or England have made him the governor (as he calls himself) if he had been sweet-natured? Unlikely.



Is Paul Ince paying lip service to authority?

ACTION IMAGES

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FA Cup: The old railway club who changed their name and moved home head for the higher ground



The old campaigner: Leigh goalkeeper Dave Felgate is inspired by the Beasants example. "The crosses look a bit further away these days and on Sundays I walk like Robocop" RUI VIERA

United we also reach for the sky



ON United's shirts is emblazoned the name of their prestigious sponsor. There can hardly be a bigger name in football than Sky Sports and since they stumped up the cash to United nobody has suggested referring the deal to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The fashionable liaison, the envy of United's rivals, has not changed them. Their goalkeeper remains their chairman and he and their manager still occasionally dip into their own pockets to ensure the players' expenses are paid. The side's most accomplished player, the one who could really have made it in the game, forsook the opportunity when his girlfriend became pregnant. Instead of taking up West Ham United's offer of a £30 a week apprenticeship he took the £100 a week available on a building site. That was 10 years ago and he and the girlfriend are no longer an item.

United increased the capacity of their ground out long ago and did so by buying 400 bucket seats which were no longer needed at Lord's Cricket Ground. Their average attendance is 50 and 60.

This is the first United with whom Sky began a relationship, not Manchester of the European Champions' League and the Premiership but Ford of the Ryman League third division. There is a slight difference in the financial arrangement: Sky Sports put £15,000 a year in to Ford while their parent organisation, BSkyB, has offered £623m to buy the Manchester club, subject to the MMC's approval.

"We approached them three years ago and they agreed almost immediately," said Ford secretary, Colin Mynott. "We were in real financial difficulty and thought of the idea of them sponsoring us as a last resort because the Ford motor company is so closely involved with their football coverage. We used to be attached to Ford and still play on their ground but none of our players work there these days and the company doesn't give us any money."

The satellite television station and the club are about to reap their reward. Ford United

Stephen Brenkley talks to the Ford men driving a struggling club to a richer future

ed have reached the first round proper of the FA Cup for the first time. Not only that but they have been drawn to play Presto North End, one of the oldest names in the game and the competition, home of the 10-vincibles, the first side to win the Double, birthplace and residence of the legendary Sir Tom Finney, site of the National Football Museum.

"It was better than getting drawn against Dagenham & Redbridge, put it that way," said Ford's manager, Denis Elliot. "I would say we've got a chance as well if Presto have an off-day and we have a good one, if the wind is permanently behind us and the pitch is a bog to prevent any passing and our goalkeeper is in the form of his life." Giant-killing managers have said that before, of course, and Ford United already come into that category.

They were promoted from the lowly Essex Senior League only two seasons ago, ran entirely no fund-raising efforts and have already played eight matches including three replays to reach this stage of the competition. Their star player is the striker Jeff Wood but at the age of 34, Elliot fears he may be slowing down. The goalkeeper-chairman is Jim Chapman, a dealer in the City who the manager dropped a few weeks ago.

"He's an outstanding bloke and didn't mind," said Elliot. "But when he came into the dressing room at half-time during the match thinking he was part of the set-up I had to tell him to leave because I'd never allowed a chairman in a dressing room in my managerial life." But Chapman will play at Presto.

Not so, Jimmy Proe, who turned down West Ham. He was sent off in the fourth qualifying round tie against Lowestoft (a real shock, that 3-1 away win) and is banned from the biggest game of his life.

"We can make some money out of this to stabilise the club for a while," said Elliot, a PE teacher. Ford United could yet appear on Sky Sports rather than the other way round.

Bring on the aristocrats



THE first round of the FA Cup barely stirs the conscience of the clubs who traditionally renew acquaintance with its robust brand of democracy on the first Saturday of the New Year. But nothing embues a community quite like a bandwagon cup run. If Leigh RMI journey to Craven Cottage next Sunday to meet the aristocrats of the lower estates expecting their final, nothing in the history of the Cup suggests that they should be so absurdly realistic. If the path of the Unibond League side has been liberally sprinkled with stardust, neither the deep pockets of Mohammed al Fayed nor the inspiration of Kevin Keegan will be enough to halt Leigh's inevitable march to further glory.

Lancastrians will identify Leigh RMI as the club formerly known as Horwich. The initials stand for Railway Mechanics Institute and date back to the days when Horwich was the main locomotive-building works for the Lancs and Yorks Railway. The works were originally at Newton Heath where there were once two clubs. At Leigh, they often wonder what happened to Manchester United.

Horwich's traumatic move to Leigh involved a far greater leap than a mere six-mile journey south west. Unsigned boundaries were crossed. Horwich is

Bolton Wanderers and football: Leigh is Wigan and rugby league. As if to emphasise the sense of dispossession, the newly-formed Leigh RMI arrived at Hilton Park, home of Leigh Rugby League Club, in March 1995 and lost their first match 4-0 to Boston United. They lost all their remaining five home matches that season and were relegated. As a welcome, it was rather less than Eccles cakes and hot cocoa. Crowds, initially intrigued by the aliens, slumped from 700 to 150, roughly where the interest had left off on the draughty slopes of Grundy Hill, the idiosyncratic ground on the side of Rivington Pike which had been home for almost 100 years.

Many of the old Horwich fans have yet to be seduced into the new territory. Grundy Hill sloped 16 feet from top diagonal to bottom diagonal and had the contours of corrugated iron, but until the new footballing nanny state prohibited such extreme drops, the ground was Horwich's prime asset. Weymouth once turned up for the final of the Bob Lord Trophy with Sean Teale, who moved on to Bournemouth and Aston Villa, in their ranks and froze at the prospect of mountaineering. "They lost the match when they saw the slope," chuckles Chris Healey, the chairman of Leigh RMI and architect of the move. "But I always reckoned there were more goals scored

up the hill than down it. I was almost tarred and feathered when we left. They draped a coffin with the colours of Horwich and paraded it round the ground, but really we had no option. Crowds were down, we had to level out the slope but had no money and people had no enthusiasm for fund-raising. We wouldn't have been in existence if we'd have stayed." Grundy Hill is a housing estate now. The vice-chairman's daughter lives over the penalty spot. "Sometimes progress has a price," says Healey.

A poor first full season at Leigh did not endear the side to the locals, who already had to contend with a struggling rugby league side. Promotion back to the First Division of the Unibond League and third place last season attracted belated interest, but Healey admits he underestimated the strength of traditional barriers. "The local press is starting to take us seriously and the supporters' club now has



ANDREW LONGMORE

150 members. This match against Fulham is beginning to open their eyes."

Inspired by their captain and goalkeeper, Dave Felgate, Leigh have beaten Winsford, Workson and Droylsden, all by the same scoreline, 2-1, to reach the first round of the Cup for the first time since 1982. Steve Weywell, the manager, was in the side that lost 3-0 at Blackpool. He was also a member of the Burnley side which won the FA Youth Cup. Nine of the team went on to play in the first team, he was one of the two who didn't.

Most of the players have scuffed around the fringes of the league, never quite finding the breaks. Micky Wallace, the full-back, played in the same England Under-18 side as Alan Shearer. Felgate was on the verge of joining Liverpool until Lincoln trebled the asking price. Mike Hooper was bought instead. "I'd driven down with the wife to have a look around and everything. I can remember it to this day." He has a Welsh cap to his name, just the one, a 5-0 victory over Romania, a tally which would have doubled his tally had not the Bobby Sands hunger strike forced the cancellation of an international against Northern Ireland.

His patrol of the north west - Chester, Bury, Bolton (three times) and Wigan - was punctuated by spells in Lincoln and Grimsby. More than 700 league games in all and too many

saves to remember, except one. "Bolton v Burnley. A long kick went over my head, I was fooled by the bounce. So I turned and bicycle-kicked it off the line. All I can remember is the look on the faces of the people in the crowd."

When Wigan gave him a free transfer a couple of years ago, Felgate finally became disillusioned. "I'd been in the game 19 years, knew all the tricks and suddenly I fell out of love with it." A friend at Winsford persuaded him to go training again. Leigh stepped in with a tempting offer and Felgate is enjoying a final twitch. "Someone like Dave Beasant is a good yardstick for me. He's still playing in the Premier League and he's nearly 40. The crosses look a bit further away these days and on Sunday mornings I walk like Robocop, but if I ever thought I couldn't play to my best, I'd pack it in."

He fancies one last shot at the big time, against an expensively assembled Fulham forward line. "I thought days like this had passed me by." Too late to make a name for himself. But not for Leigh RMI, who hope to take 1,500 supporters with them on the day trip. £20 all-in, now that Asda have sponsored the coaches. "With luck, some might come and watch us every home game," says Healey. Giant-killing would be a readily identifiable trade, even in the land of rugby league.

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Rousseau flies in to save the tour

Brian Lara will have to be reinstated as captain to settle conflict. By Stephen Brenkley

ONE final flight into Heathrow Airport today will determine the future of West Indies' historic cricket tour of South Africa. It will have on board Pat Rousseau, an avuncular looking, white-haired fellow who is no stranger to recent controversy and who holds the key to the settlement of an increasingly bizarre industrial dispute.

Rousseau is the president of the West Indies Cricket Board and his presence is crucial - of greater significance even than the letter of imprecation from another president, Nelson Mandela - to persuading the players of the Caribbean to take up their tools once more. To achieve any kind of positive resolution Rousseau must be prepared to make considerable concessions as well as rescinding several decisions he and his colleagues have already made (and might be deeply regretting). Not least among the latter, and in truth probably paramount, is the reinstatement as captain of Brian Lara. It will be an about-turn unparalleled in the sport but it is also one that Rousseau may have no option but to take.

Not that anything should be taken for granted in a stand-off which was mistakenly perceived at its outset to be mainly con-

cerned with Lara and his ego but is plainly about much wider issues, to wit, all West Indian international cricketers and their status. When Courtney Walsh, the great fast bowler and president of the West Indies Players' Association strolled lithely yesterday afternoon into the lobby of the airport hotel where he and his team-mates have been staying (boiled up, in the parlance of the dispute) he was clear in his view.

"It's good news for us that Pat Rousseau is coming," he said, not least perhaps because Rousseau had stated throughout the week that he was not prepared to come. "The West Indian cricket team are unanimous in their wish that the tour takes place. They fully appreciate the importance of the tour both to the Board and to the public of South Africa as emphasised by the letter of Nelson Mandela. We're equally unanimous that the tour can only take place if the West Indies Board met here with us in London in order to finalise contracts for the tour and draw up guidelines for future series."

Walsh read those words from a prepared statement but ex-



Shuttle diplomacy: Walsh and Bacher talk at a Heathrow hotel (left), where Brian Lara (right) kept a low profile

panded a little afterwards. He did not think it was really a dispute, he said, but the players merely wanted to negotiate. They wanted to safeguard the future of the youngsters coming into the game. Oh, and the reinstatement of Lara was a major part of the deal.

This strange affair of players boycotting a tour in which they openly admit they are desperate to participate began in mid-August when the West Indian

Board first sent out their proposed contracts for the trip. But it took its most significant twist barely more than a week ago in Bangladesh in a moment which may be described as when the economy seats all but broke the fast bowlers' backs.

Simply, the team who flew out for the Wills ICC one-day tournament involving all the Test playing nations discovered that they were alone in having been in the cheapest

seats. When you are an athlete tall enough to be a basketball player - and there are several in the West Indies team - this can cause extreme discomfort.

It was probably this apparently trivial slight, as much as anything, which decided the players that it was time to make a stand. As captain, Lara was essential to the cause but he was by no means a lone provocateur. The Board then proceeded to get things badly wrong.

Instead of embarking for South Africa from Dhaka, Lara and Hooper flew to London where they met several other players who had not been to Bangladesh, including Walsh. Others who had been playing in the Bangladesh tournament flew on to South Africa as expected. The players in London, many of them senior, hoped that the Board would listen to their demands for a better deal. The Board did no such thing. They

convened a meeting at which they sacked Lara and his deputy, Hooper, and fined the others who were in London.

This immediately provoked an old-fashioned industrial dispute escalation. The players who were already in South Africa expressed solidarity with their colleagues and flew to London. They were accompanied by the tour manager, Clive Lloyd, who yesterday advised negotiation, and by Dr Ali Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, an old hand at cricket disputes, who came armed with the Mandela Letter.

There was an element, as there is in all the best strikes, of "yah boo sucks". The Board outlined what they saw as the sequence of events leading to the impasse. When they proposed the tour contracts, they said, the Players' Association did not respond for more than 40 days. On 27 October the Board agreed an increase of \$30,000 to \$555,000 in fees for the tour but stuck by their insistence that other long-term issues for fee structures could not be dealt with.

The players responded by saying that the 40-day delay had not taken place and that the dispute was not about fees, "it is about recognition of the rights of the players, respect of the players by the WICB." The Board sent Joel Garner to London to negotiate. He and Walsh appeared on several occasions in the same West Indies side and probably talked over old times.

Players and officials have been shuttling between two Heathrow hotels, conference telephone calls have been taking place regularly, Bacher has been smilingly optimistic. But nothing was happening. On Friday afternoon the players' agent, Jonathan Barnett, a respected but no-nonsense figure, turned up. He looked exasperated when he left. How could he negotiate when there was nobody to negotiate with? Rousseau had to be there. A few hours later Rousseau, who was last before the world when the Jamaica Test against England was abandoned last year, said he would be.

If nothing else, it all demonstrates that cricket can still capture the attention of the world. They should be some Test matches in South Africa this winter.

England's stress rehearsal

A SERIES of rash shots meant England wasted any chance of gaining what is obviously much-needed batting practice on the opening day of their tour match against South Australia here yesterday. A flurry of misjudgements meant they fell to 22 for 4 on their way to a paltry total of 187 at the batsman-friendly Adelaide Oval.

Strengthened by the return of the captain, Alec Stewart, Michael Atherton and Mark Butcher from injury and with a maximum of four innings remaining before the First Test in Brisbane on 20 November, four of their leading batsmen wasted their opportunity to impress in ideal conditions.

Eluding to hat, England were dismissed for a sub-standard total, which was looking even more so by the close as South Australia comfortably progressed to 26 without loss from 11 overs.

"It was a pretty poor effort really, not a good enough day for us with the bat," admitted David Lloyd, the England coach, without bothering to

BY MYLES HODGSON
in Adelaide

hide his disappointment. "You would like to think that your top-line batters would get a start - we have played a number of indifferent shots, and it was not good enough."

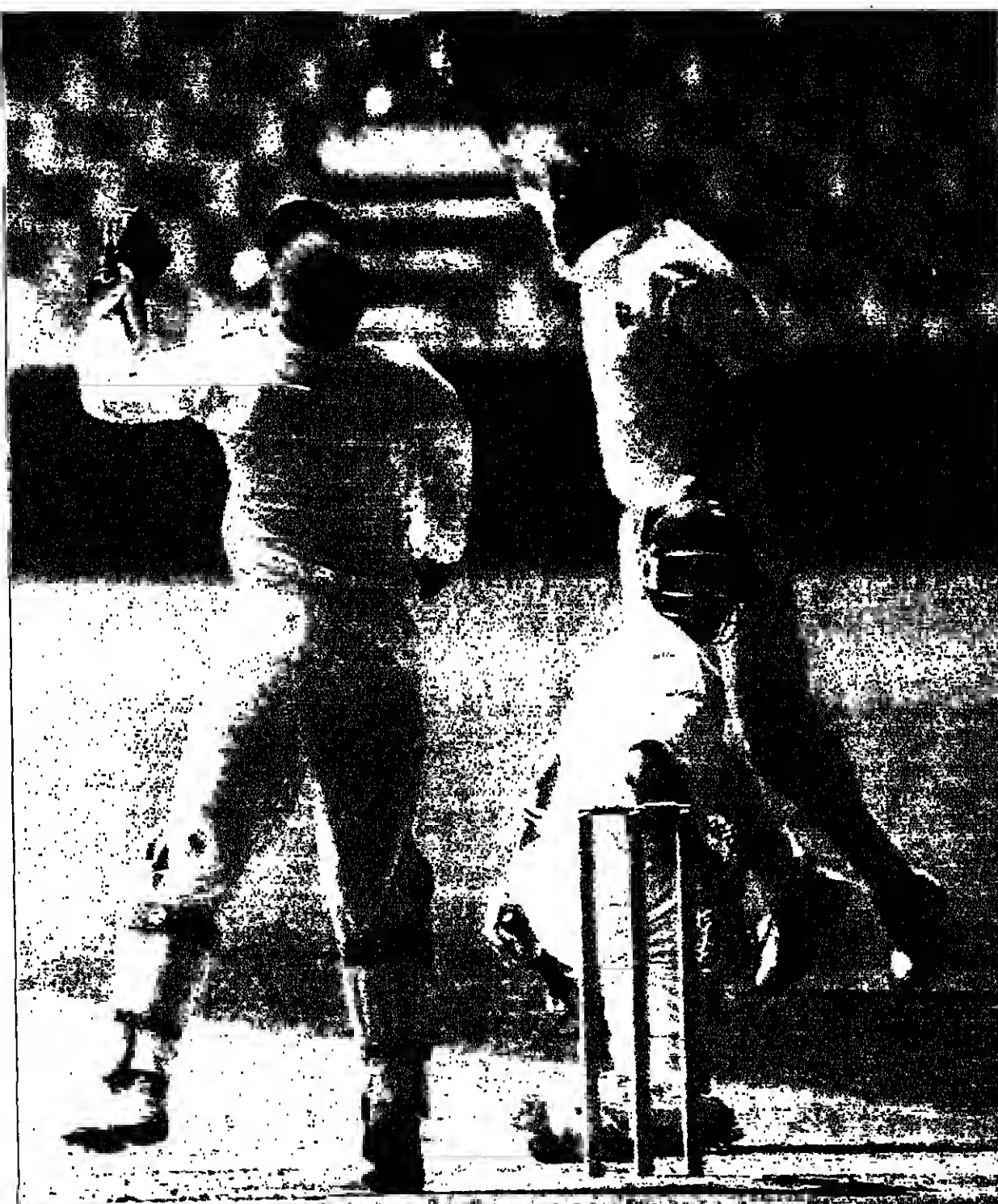
"The shot selection from everybody really has got to be better. We need to play much better than that, we can play much better than that and we will play much better than that," he said.

But for a determined 73-run partnership between Nasser Hussain and Mark Ramprakash, the only two of England's likely top-order batsmen for the First Test to reach double figures, followed by a gutsy half-century from Dominic Cork, the tourists may have struggled to reach even 150.

Despite lost Butcher, who edged behind in the sixth over of the morning, they had negotiated the first 15 overs without too many alarms only to lose Stewart, Graham Thorpe and Atherton in a spell of 22 balls to leave them struggling on 22 for four.

Atherton is the only member of that trio who could claim that luck transpired against him after being brilliantly caught at short leg by Martin Paul turning Jason Gillespie off his legs from the middle of the bat. But neither Stewart or Thorpe had any excuses when both were caught at slip and gully by Nathan Adcock after driving wildly at deliveries outside the off stump.

Hussain, the in-form batsman in the England party following his century against Western Australia in Perth, stood up to the responsibility of shielding England's long tail superbly and with Ramprakash providing solid support, cautiously guided the tourists away from their disastrous start.



Stinking feeling: Nasser Hussain realises his resistance is over as wicket-keeper Tim Nielsen celebrates

They punished the novice spin pair Andrew Crook and Ewan Arnold, both making their first class debuts, until more lapses in concentration also caused their downfalls and ended any hope of England reaching anything like a respectable total.

Ramprakash misread the turn exerted by leg-spinner Arnold and edged to slip while Hussain, attempting to guide

Crook down to fine leg, instead gave a simple catch behind to the wicketkeeper, Tim Nielsen.

Instead of the expected capitulation, however, Cork made his first half century for England since scoring 59 against New Zealand in Auckland nearly two years ago while Alex Tudor compiled an enterprising 33 to guide England past 150.

Lloyd stressed: "We are always after Corky to score runs

and the longer he can spend either accumulating or attacking at the crease the better. Young Alex Tudor also batted well, did all the right things and played with a straight bat. He let it go to his head at the end by chasing a wide one, but that's a good start for a lad who came here as number 17 in the squad."

But it failed to overshadow England's shortcomings and Lloyd added: "We are disap-

pointed because that is not a 187-all-out pitch. You could do without days like that but when they happen the only way to handle it is to roll your sleeves up and put the work in."

"There were no great terrors in that pitch apart from a bit of early movement and if they had the chance to get in they should have booked in for a long time. We have not covered ourselves in glory."

Sad end to a state of grace

THE only appropriate emotional response to the strike by the West Indian cricketers is an overwhelming sadness. Even on their broodier days, West Indians have shown an instinctive love and understanding of the game which goes deeper than the colour of the next bank note.

Now, the heirs to a precious inheritance laid down by Lord Learie Constantine of Trinidad, Tuhago and Nelson (Lancashire) and Sir Garfield Sobers have to be talked down from the ledge to be paid for what most West Indians would gladly do for the price of the next run. The scowl has replaced the smile as the symbol of West Indian cricket. Or perhaps the rubbing together of thumb and forefinger, the universal language of the hustler.

It is easy to be nostalgic about the great West Indian sides. When they were indisputably the best side in the world for 20 years, their cricket was tinged with menace. The image of the joyous Caribbean cricketer looked a little different with a bat in your hand and Michael Holding 22 yards away. No teams were more calculating and single-minded than those captained initially by Clive Lloyd and then by Viv Richards, but their batting was still shot through with an attractively hedonistic streak.

From the days of George Headley, Clyde Walcott and Everton Weekes through to Viv Richards, run-making was an expression of character, individuality and sovereignty. The way the runs were made was as significant as their number and recklessness was always on the flip side of the cavalier's coin. The very vulnerability added to the attraction and spectators the world over flocked to watch them play. Politics were never far from the surface, but most inter-island and colonial inequalities were levelled once the team took the field.

The adulation which accompanied the rise of Brian Lara reflected universal joy at the perpetuation of a glorious tradition. Lara seemed to combine the best of Caribbean and orthodox methods just as

BY ANDREW LONGMORE
Chief Sports Writer

Headley, the Black Bradman, had reputedly done before and after the Second World War. Lara bats like a West Indian should, with classical rigour yet a barely disguised disdain for the refinements of the coaching manual. The backlift is too prominent, the footwork a little casual and the shot selection often dubious, except that Lara in full flow renders such matters largely irrelevant. It did not, perhaps, could never, last. The tainting of Lara has been one of the more melancholy of recent morality tales. The fact that the most gifted batsman of this or any other generation should be the focal point for some say the cause of the discontent within the West Indian camp serves only to sharpen the indignity.

The people of the Caribbean can quite justifiably feel insulted by their team's sulks. It is doubtful if the streets of Kingston or St John's will be awash with sympathy for cricketers who, by the standards of the locals, are handsomely paid. Whether the overtly emotional pitch taken by Ali Bacher struck the right chord is equally open to question. But the West Indies' reaction to his arrival, bearing a note from Nelson Mandela, was aptly summed up by Courtney Walsh, who kept him waiting for half an hour. This is the man who has done more than anyone to break down apartheid barriers in South African sport.

The West Indians have been nurturing grievances against their Board for some years. Divisions have been heightened by the rival candidacies for the captaincy: Jamaicans rallying behind Walsh, Trinidadians for Lara. And now, new home for the Board's offices, harbour ambitions of their own. Neither is the parous state of the Board's finances anything new. What has changed is the attitude of the cricketers. The charm has gone, mislaid amid the potted palms and piped music of a non-descript hotel near Heathrow. Not much of a place to lose a glorious tradition.

Forget the barbs, we'll stick to the middle way

WHEN England hit town the Australians like nothing better than getting straight into us. No sooner had we left Perth with the words of Justin Langer ringing in our ears than we arrived in Adelaide to discover that Greg Chappell was entering the fray.

Langer played at Middlesex last season and I was initially surprised by his harsh comments about England's decline. Western Australia, Chappell has handed us as a team without much flair. It is good to know that the phoney war is continuing. It is obviously part of a deliberate policy to subject us to a bombardment of such comments and we are noting them all.

England might have done better against WA but there were still many positive aspects to the game.

The WACA pitch is a one-off, like nothing in England and perhaps the fastest in the world. Playing on it so early in the tour gave us an invaluable work-out for the Second Test there.

It was extremely hard and quick and allowed the bowlers no lateral movement at all. The ball grew soft early and batsmen who are capable pullers and cutters can play off the back foot. It is a pitch which has different requirements from those to which we are accustomed. On the bowling front, Alan Mullally swung the ball and Darren Gough found a steady rhythm. Gus Fraser had a tough time of it but do not be too worried about that - other pitches will suit him more. Most of the batsmen spent some time at the crease, and it's in the middle where it's important. Nets can do so much but it

is during matches that you begin to put into practice your strategy.

When Langer set England a target after declaring in the second innings it was not our immediate intention to play for the draw, but it would have been reckless to go for a win straightaway. We had only five specialist batsmen and one of those, Mark Butcher, had several stitches in his face after ducking into a short ball which squeezed through the visor on his helmet. That's how quick the pitch is - one slight misjudgement, (which is all it was, no more) and a batsman can be surprised.

By chasing the runs all the way through we might easily have put needless pressure on our tail, getting them to take chances by sweeping and improvising, which we don't want them to do at this stage. When John Crawley was out soon after tea



MARK RAMPRAKASH

on the last day it would have been silly to get out trying for quick runs. We would not throw away Test matches like that and it is important to remember that this was our first four-day game. Time in the middle could not be over-rated, whatever Justin said.

WA, however, are a good example of the strength in depth of Australian cricket. They had five international players out, yet they were still superbly competitive. A couple of rookie middle-order batsmen played with a really keen, well-honed approach. Matt Nicholson, the bowler who took seven wickets in the first innings, had been out of the game for 18 months with chronic fatigue syndrome but looked a real prospect: quick and on target. Mind you, he bowled 38 overs at us, so no wonder he had chronic fatigue syndrome.

Australia's young players know how hard it is to get in the team, they know they have to be spot on from one match to the next. Their 21-year-olds are comparable to those of Middlesex who made their debuts last season: English players have the tal-

ent but they must be a touch more professional in their approach.

Where we realise we must improve is in our catching - we put down several chances in the WA match. Different light, different pace off the pitch had something to do with it but the point is very much that we have to get it right for the Tests. We know we have to play constantly as a unit in every session because the match can slip away in that time.

Our arrival in Adelaide not only coincided with Greg Chappell's observations but also brought back several memories. Awaiting me in the hotel was a fax from somebody who described himself as the fastest bowler I ever faced. It was Carl Maynard who used to bowl bouncers at me when we played in Middlesex Under-11s together, was forced to

give up the game with a bad back and is now living over here.

I first came to Adelaide 11 years ago with the England Under-19 team in the first World Cup. We reached the semi-final and played against Australia, whose attack was opened by a gangly left-arm fast bowler who swung it. He also got me out if I remember correctly. His name was Alan Mullally.

The last time I was here was four years ago when I was called up from the A tour to join the senior squad because of injuries. I did not play in the Fourth Test in Adelaide but I did arrive in time to see Mike Gatting spend an eternity on 99 before finally getting his century. There's a notice in the Adelaide dressing room saying M W Gatting was the last Englishman here. We must try to update that.

They also have to deal with the Players' Association which, after years as a loose, disorganised body, established a permanent secretariat in Barbados last April under the direction of the former Test all-rounder, team manager and chief selector, David Holford. And with a public predictably unwilling to put up with a sub-standard team, not to mention presidents and prime ministers despoiling Lara and his colleagues to play on, the Board members are soon likely to find their positions untenable.

Newcastle's power play. During the siege, Hurter crossed the Quins line but was adjudged not to have grounded the ball and Rob Andrew suffered a similar fate. In the dying moments, Brooke was sent to the sin-bin but somehow Quins survived. *Harrogate's William G. Gray (1995, p. 24)*

Harrogate's D. Officer, *Leeds' J. Packer (1995, p. 10)*, *H. Holmes (C. Wright, 61)*, *J. Leonard (D. Barnes, 40)*, *K. Wood, A. Jones, G. Usherby (J. Packer, 60)*, *G. Morgan, D. Brooke, C. Shevory (A. Jones, 60)*

Newcastle's S. Levy, *V. Vassanitis, A. St. Louis, R. Andrews, T. Underwood (J. Taylor, 18)*, *T. Williamson, G. Armstrong, G. Graham, R. Mearns, M. Hurter, G. Archer (p. 106)*, *60 (D. St. Louis, R. Mearns, G. Archer, 61)*, *D. P. Ryan (p. 60)*

Referee: C. Rees (London)

Good as this was, the best was yet to come and once again Greenwood had a hand in it, although this time in a supporting role. Healy, buzzing with energy and ideas, fired off a perfectly weighted kick which slipped under Adebayo Adebayo's grasp. Leon Lloyd, Joel Stransky, Greenwood and Neil Back all handed before the flanker lobbed the ball to O'Connell, who scored under the post. For the third time in just 21 minutes Stransky added the goal points and Leicester were ahead 21-3, the Bath points having been kicked by Mike Catt.



A police spokesman said they had received no official complaint, adding he understood the club would conduct an inquiry after watching video evidence of what occurred.

The Scottish international referee Ed Murray deserves sympathy. He had his work cut

If the pace of the game from start to finish was unbelievable, then the opening 20 minutes

Saints' driving was impeccable. Even when they were reduced to 14 men after Mackinnon was spotted by a touch judge punching and was consigned to the sin-bin for the remaining two minutes of the half, Saints did not flag, and as they trooped off at half-time it was to a standing ovation.

A police spokesman said they had received no official complaint, adding he understood the club would conduct an inquiry after watching video evidence of what occurred.

The Scottish international referee Ed Murray deserves sympathy. He had his work cut



back in the 52nd minute after the scrum-half, Charlie Harrison, had slipped the clutches of Nathan Carter to score. This inspired Jason Forster to embark on a storming 15 minutes where he appeared to be everywhere. His excellent support allowed Harrison to keep driving Glasgow back to the front.

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Twickenham lost in a world of its own

BAD TIDINGS, like the No 27 bus, come in threes. First the Rugby Football Union declared a loss of £4m. Next, they were summoned to appear before the International Rugby Board tribunal to explain their position in relation to their clubs and the challenge in the European court to the games regulations. Then, last week, they were threatened with the removal of their World Cup games from Twickenham unless they were able to deliver a "clean" ground in compliance with the tournament staging agreement.

The problem concerns the corporate hospitality arrangements at Twickenham and the deal struck four years ago with the RFU's agents, Peter Farfit Sport, who have exclusive rights to the two prime hospitality restaurants, Obolensky's and Wakefield's. When the agreement was

signed it was on the understanding that PPS would be able to sell hospitality packages in those areas for the 1999 World Cup. Despite numerous warnings of the likely problems in delivery of the facilities and despite the fact that, as joint hosts of the 1991 World Cup, they must have known about and clearly understood the concept of the "clean" ground (one without any contractual commitments for perimeter advertising or corporate hospitality) the RFU pressed on regardless.

During the past six months, however, Rugby World Cup Ltd, the tournament organisers, have become increasingly bullish on the subject and last week sent a letter to Robert Horner, the RFU's representative dealing with World Cup matters, threatening the RFU with the removal of all World Cup matches

at Twickenham unless they were able to comply with the terms of the agreement. This requires them to make all Twickenham's hospitality sites available to the consortium charged with the responsibility of selling World Cup packages.

The problems at Twickenham are made worse by the fact that the official hospitality facilities are located some distance from the ground, whereas private operators like Mike Burton are virtually on site. The two choice areas are, of course, Obolensky's and Wakefield's and understandably PPS have been doing everything in their power to hold on to them.

They have been placed in a very difficult position. They have invested a substantial amount in their hospitality business at Twickenham and the World Cup was presumably a



CHRIS REA

major factor in their decision to do the deal with the RFU. Quite apart from the financial aspect PPS are concerned that if the RFU back down and agree to RWC's demands for a clean ground, the company will lose the goodwill and trust of clients who are expecting World Cup packages. But they must also be aware of the danger that might be done to their relationship with the RFU should the question of financial compensation arise. Negotiations be-

tween the RFU and RWC are continuing and Mike Wheeler, the managing director of PPS, expects to hear the outcome within the next 48 hours.

A compromise, satisfactory to both parties, should be possible. In fairness to the RFU, the principle of the clean ground is difficult to enforce. It is only natural for ground authorities to want to maximise the revenue potential for major events such as World Cups whether it be football, rugby or cricket and it does appear unreasonable for the tournament organisers to make such demands when many contracts are signed years in advance.

With their troubles mounting on the world from the RFU may be forgiven for turning to the conspiracy theory as the reason for their increasing isolation. Following Brian

Baister's election as chairman of the RFU's Board of Management last summer, he announced that one of his priorities would be the restoration of England's good name in the committee room of world rugby. Yet they are being assailed on all sides, and despite their protestations of innocence they have brought much of it on their own heads. Does it not strike the membership as even mildly absurd that it is the IRB, resisted all the way along the line by Twickenham, who are battling to preserve the RFU's right to govern and control their own affairs? It was not until beyond the 11th hour that the RFU's response to the club's challenge to their regulations was submitted to Brussels, and the content of that response is unlikely to find favour with the IRB. I understand that parts of it are at variants with

the IRB's submission, and although not fully supportive of the clubs the RFU are clearly not on the same wavelength as the world's governing body. This is certain to create a certain frisson at the meeting next month when the RFU have to appear before the IRB's tribunal.

The problem is that Twickenham is becoming increasingly detached from the RFU. The members of the Board of Management no longer represent the bodies who elected them. They are not speaking and acting on behalf of the game but for themselves. Many of their actions are not even known by the Council members let alone agreed by them. There are troubled times ahead and all the while the game, with its mounting debt and diminishing returns, is careering towards the precipice.

'Professionalism has brought the best out of players on the pitch. It's still damned hard work'

Clarke aims for paradise regained

England's gentle giant will be there when the going gets tough - again. By Andrew Longmore

A silent cheer greeted the announcement of the first England squad of the winter. One for the good guys. Or to put it another way, one hurrah for Ben Clarke, who is in grave danger of bringing rugby union a decent name despite the universal attempts of the powerbrokers to dismember his sport. Clarke is the acceptable face of professionalism. He eats, sleeps and dreams rugby, yet retains the qualities and demeanour of the gentleman amateur. Talking to Clarke, hearing his schoolboyish chuckle, sensing the depth of his commitment to the game, it is possible to believe that rugby really will be all right in the end. In the present climate, that is no small tribute.

At the time, Clarke was an unlikely standard bearer for the new age of professionalism. He had a good job with National Power, which allowed him, most thought, the best of both worlds: time off to play, time away from rugby to recharge his batteries. One of the mainstays of a highly successful Bath side, he doubled as England's pin-up boy, proof that cauliflower ears and a squashed nose were not necessarily the requisites for an England forward. But, not for the first time, we underestimated the man. Clarke was a professional just waiting to sign the papers. When the final hinge was broken off the doors of amateurism, Clarke was one of the first across the threshold. From Bath he moved to Richmond, for a reported £1m five-year deal which stunned the suits at Twickenham. What was

the man thinking of? Leaving the Premiership for the second division. And all for the corporate shilling? There is no proof, nor will Clarke ever reveal his inner thoughts, but good judges felt he paid a higher price than was strictly deserved for dropping out of sight. *Pour encourager les autres.* The England management did not want all their best forwards disappearing to tinpot leagues at the drop of a pound coin or million. Clarke was widely criticised for putting his England place in jeopardy. If he had known how desolate and windswept the wilderness, he might have thought twice, but, sitting back in Paradise Two, the restaurant he owns just round the corner from the old Richmond ground, the feeling of justification is easily apparent, however modestly expressed. "Told you so" is not a phrase readily available in Clarke's vocabulary. His smile says it all.

"On reflection, the move did affect my England place, but I was back in the Premier League the following season and I was still out of the squad. Yes, it did test my patience and it was very frustrating at times, but I never lost confidence in my ability and I knew that if I got the opportunity, I could prove myself." He pauses, then adds. "Again." Again, that's the critical point, the testimony to a strength of character many felt Clarke lacked.

The emergence of Tony Diprose, Richard Hill and Lawrence Dallaglio, allied to the resurgence of Neil Back and Tim Rodber, made the England back row as hard a club to penetrate as the MCC. From being an automatic choice, Clarke dropped on to the waiting list, for reasons he can still not entirely pinpoint. His first season at Richmond was not his finest, he will admit, and there was a perception that his ball-handling was not quite slick enough for the fluid post-professional game. More likely, Clarke, gentle giant that he is, did not put himself about enough. "I've always believed in doing things not talking about them," he says. "I read a lot about players trying to influence coaches to select them, but it's all about how you play."

England's loss was Richmond's gain. Clarke put heart and soul into bringing a semblance of reality to the vision of Ashley Levett, the new owner. The notion that professionalism would simply mean putting your boots on for an hour or so every day, playing on Saturdays and picking up the cheque was not one which had much appeal. "I think a lot of players would reflect that there was more to being a professional than they first thought. A lot of other responsibilities come with the job, particularly on the commercial side. At the time I came to Richmond, I didn't realise that there would be all those changes in my life."

"I knew people thought I'd only come for the money and I can't really respond to that. It's their opinion. My response now is that what has happened at Richmond is why I decided to join the club. We're fifth in the Premiership, we've moved to a new 25,000 seater stadium and we've got a superb team both on and off the pitch." That the new stadium is in Reading and shared with Reading Football Club is just one of the facts of commercial life. A crowd of 6,500 against Bedford augured well for the future.

Overlooked for the Lions, dispatched to Argentina for the winter of 1996, Clarke clung to the belief that the wheel would turn. He probably did not expect to hear the first crack on a mudheap in Hamilton's Rugby Park as England tried to regain some modicum of pride against a New Zealand second team after humiliation in Australia. Clarke was left on the bench for the First Test, relegated to unimpeachable choice flanker behind Ben Sturman and Richard Pool-Jones. The subsequent mayhem was widely predicted and once Clarke had proved his worth to Clive Woodward in Hamilton, the recall was beyond question. "The guy's an absolute diamond," Woodward said after a revitalised England performance in the Auckland Test. The All Blacks, who had always re-

garded Clarke as a suitable recipient of the silver fern, were perplexed at finding him in such lowly company. They had wanted to nationalise him after the 1993 Lions Tour.

Full rehabilitation, however, had to wait until the early days of this season. Clarke is by no means a certainty to start the first of England's two World Cup qualifiers, against Holland, next Saturday. Not with Dallaglio, Back, Hill and Diprose in the squad. But in the more demanding physical encounter with the rampant South Africans early next month the temptation to match Clarke



Definitive professional: Ben Clarke has proved he really does possess strength of character

ROBERT HALLAM

Four to face a test of time

Scott Quinnell
(Wales)

Since receiving a Prodigal Son's welcome back from league in 1996, Quinnell has been an enigma. On occasions, the 26-year-old Cardiff No 8 has used his bull-like strength to produce dominant, world-class performances, but opinion on him is still divided in the Principality. His cause was not helped when he was sidelined for much of last season by the groin injury which prematurely ended his participation in the 1997 Lions tour of South Africa. Now, due to his wife's homesickness, he is seeking a move back to Wales and is in the shop window. So he will be hoping that his recent sending off does not prevent him from facing South Africa at Wembley on Saturday, and then to make a big impression against Argentina.

Tony Underwood
(England)

Even though Austin Healey, Tom Baim, Spencer Brown, Paul Sampson and Tim Stimpson were all used as wings during England's summer tour, it is a fair bet that Clive Woodward's first-choice selections would be David Rees and Tony Underwood. Both sat out the summer with injuries and Rees is still struggling this season. Underwood has benefited from the rest and is running into form and fitness in time to claim his first England cap in more than 18 months. His hat-trick last week end, suggested that he is again near the standard that earned him his first cap in 1992 and selection for last year's Lions. However, he turns 30 in February and knows he is unlikely to have too many more chances.

Jeremy Davidson
(Ireland)

After returning from the Lions tour of South Africa established as one of the game's outstanding locks, the 24-year-old Ulsterman has had a frustrating time. He missed the whole of last season while recovering from a knee operation and has since moved from London Irish to Castres where he has been quietly regaining fitness and form. Valuable though his abrasive, dynamic style of play undoubtedly is, he faces a formidable job just to re-establish himself in the Irish side. The team will be captained by the Saracens' lock, Paddy Johns, while the young London Irish second row, Malcolm O'Kelly, who stood in for him last season, has made an impressive start to the current campaign.

Kenny Logan
(Scotland)

Another player to have foregone a summer tour for fitness reasons, the 26-year-old wing has made a strong start to the season with Wasps. Not only has he claimed his usual quota of tries, but he has become Wasps' principal place kicker. The absence of Craig Chalmers from the squad for Saturday's meeting with the new Zealand Maori suggests that he is a candidate for the kicking duties. However, he has been dropped more than once by the Scottish selectors and has much to prove during the coming weeks if he is to prolong his international career.

PAUL TROW

THE AUTUMN INTERNATIONALS

Saturday 14 November
England v Holland* (Huddersfield)
Ireland v Georgia* (Lansdowne Road)
Scotland v NZ Maori (Murrayfield)
Wales v South Africa (Wembley)
Sunday 15 November
France v Argentina (Nantes)
Wednesday 18 November
Georgia v Romania* (Dublin)
Saturday 21 November
England v Argentina* (Dublin)
Wales v Argentina* (Jerez)
Ireland v South Africa (Murrayfield)
France v Australia (Paris)

Sunday 22 November
England v Italy* (Huddersfield)
Saturday 28 November
England v Australia (Twickenham)
Ireland v South Africa (Lansdowne Road)
Scotland v Portugal* (Murrayfield)
Wednesday 2 December
Spain v Portugal* (Murrayfield)
Saturday 5 December
England v South Africa (Twickenham)
Scotland v Spain* (Murrayfield)
Saturday 6 February 1999
Five Nations Championship opens
* denotes World Cup qualifier

Townsend returns with a broader vision

IT WAS not quite French leave: Gregor Townsend needed no one's permission - other than the support of his wife, Claire - to pack up his troubles in his sponsored kit bag and slip over to Brive immediately after his honeymoon in July; but all the same there was an element of independence, defiance even, as the Scotland international bade farewell to Blighty and more specifically, Northampton, in the summer.

There are those who would argue that finding himself playing second fiddle to Paul Grayson in the stand-off berth was what finally made up Townsend's mind, but the man

himself is too generous, and wise, to stoop to giving credence to that kind of theory.

"I have done this because I am trying to improve myself as a rugby player," explained Townsend, who was last week named in Scotland's squad for the autumn internationals. "I am trying to broaden my rugby education. I want to strengthen the quality of my game."

Again there are those who would argue that his game is already of the highest quality. But Townsend, 25, disagrees. "The French club game tests your skills," he said. "They approach things differently."

But Townsend himself is un-

conventional, respected for his blistering pace off the mark, his startling angles that open up defences and leave defenders open-mouthed, as well as his breathtaking speed of thought and analysis, all attributes that any player, French or otherwise, would be glad to have.

And by the sound of it, Brive are getting that. Townsend admitted: "I am allowed to play my own game, but here they want me running on to the ball, moving it wide. But you can't always have the stand-off running on to the ball and so they also want me to take the ball up myself." It is, as Townsend explained, a matter of finding the

David Llewellyn hears how the Scots' playmaker is blossoming abroad

balance, of making the right option at the right time.

Which brings us back to his footballing brain. So what improvements does he expect to see? "I cannot isolate any specific element of my game that has improved, but I feel that there has been a general improvement." And as each French lesson passes, and he has four of them a week,

Townsend grows in confidence. "At first, with the language thing, it was quite hard. At the beginning I was playing stand-off but it was not easy. I had three games there and the problems were not just confined to communicating ideas and so on; I was not familiar with the way they played. In training you have time to go over things and break it all down, but in the heat of a match everything has to be done instantly, and in another language that is not easy."

So, with an edge of irony, he was moved out to centre where he had five matches. "It made things a lot easier," Townsend said. "I was able to watch what

they did and how they approached the game and I was not having to call the shots."

He subsequently moved back to No 10 only to suffer a shoulder injury, which sidelined him for four weeks. But all the while he has been absorbing French rugby culture, beginning to put a shape to the way they think and play, which could be very useful for Scotland, although, as he stressed: "French club rugby is played completely differently from the way the national side approaches the game. At club level it is a power game, whereas the national team use the backs a lot more."

It should still stand Scotland

in good stead. Townsend makes sure that he stays in touch with Scotland's director of rugby, Jim Telfer, and coach John Rutherford. "I do feel cut off at times, but I have made a few phone calls to Jim and John and they have seen me once this season as well," he said.

Whatever the pitfalls of playing abroad, Townsend is determined to enjoy himself. He has an option to leave Brive at the end of his first year, but it is far more likely he will stay on and perhaps even exercise the option that lies at the other end of the deal, which would see him playing for a third season.

Like music, sport transcends



Townsend: Education

all barriers of race, creed and language. There is little doubt that however sophisticated and accomplished a rugby player Townsend is at present, by the end of his sojourn abroad he will have added a dash of French polish. After all that is what he is there for.

JP 11/10/98

Wiles' expensive import realises his duty is to bring southern comfort to the Principality

Henry and the Black arts



TIM GLOVER

After watching his first few games in Wales, the thought might have crossed Graham Henry's mind that he was in the wrong place at the wrong time. "I was a bit astounded at the standard," he admitted. "It looked like Third Division stuff." Henry has five years to revive a cause that appeared to have fallen into terminal decline.

Henry was in trouble before the big Bang of 1995 and the consensus since professionalism is at the situation has gone from bad to awful. However, the lords have appointed a winner and rarely have so many placed such faith in one man. To call it all he's a Kiwi. "It's a major challenge," Henry said. "I know it's not going to be easy but the people have been superb. It's stimulating. Frustrating at times but stimulating."

The last time Henry was in the Principality he was coach of New Zealand schools and they lost to Wales 9-8 at Cardiff Arms Park. "The boys here are so different to those at home," Henry said. "A lot of them are very talented. They would be good players if they were handled correctly." What Henry has discovered since succeeding Kevin Boyring as coach in August is the almost nothing has been handled correctly; the structure has to be discarded from top to bottom. Some of the kids are playing 10 games a season and they are lack of it. Everybody wants the talented player. In New Zealand he wouldn't play more than 25 games.

Henry has been putting himself about, visiting places that have never been a Wales coach. "Players are being paid even in the lowest divisions and for some it's their only source of income. It's ludicrous. I have come across clubs who have to pay a £500 bonus to the players and they are worried about winning. I've seen Under-13 and Under-14 teams that can't play because they can't find a coach."

You'd have thought one of the fathers would volunteer."

Henry, Wales' 13th coach in 30 years, has spoken to Bowring, indeed he took him along to the Welsh Rugby Writers' Dinner. "Kevin didn't have to talk to me and I appreciated that. I have great sympathy for the guys who have been and gone. They had inadequate preparation. The WRU has to sort itself out and quickly."

Henry's job, of course, has not been made easier by the decision of Cardiff and Swansea to play against English clubs rather than their own. Henry couldn't possibly comment but he would learn a lot more from watching Cardiff against Richmond than Newport against Caerphilly.

"Players have moved from Wales for a better quality of rugby. It's very important that the clubs and the WRU travel the same road. The Super 12 in the southern hemisphere has led to an increase in ability of as much as 40 per cent. To be competitive we'd need to play at a much higher level on a regular basis. Look at Australia. It has only three professional bases, New South Wales, Queensland and ACT and 90 players and they are the second-best side in the world. We need a structure in Wales that is similar."

If Australia are the second best, South Africa, who have won their last 13 games, are currently No 1. Wales, who conceded 96 points to South Africa in the summer, meet them at Wembley on Saturday. It sounds like a case for the League Against Cruel Sports. Henry won't look at videos of previous Welsh performances. "Because of the structure my



Different worlds: Henry and the World Cup, the battle for which Wales will host next year. "I had a good feeling very quickly," he said

HOW EVANS

predecessors were in a no-win situation. I have got time to put it right." Whether he has had time to prepare for the Springboks is another matter. "I know there are going to be occasions when I get my arse kicked and mentally it's going to be hard to handle. I'm used to winning. It's easy to blame the players all the time but the foundations have been very shaky. My worry is that the game against South Africa is too big a step. I'm not going to put pressure on the team by saying we're going to restrict South Africa to X points. I want them to play with pride and I want the Welsh people to be proud, and if we can achieve that it'll be a good start."

Wales have injuries, little strength in depth - "we have a skeleton," according to Henry - and a southern hemisphere referee at Wembley. "I'd much rather one from the northern

hemisphere. They are defender-friendly. The southern guys are attacker-friendly and there's much more flow to the game. A lot of players here aren't used to that."

Henry didn't get where he is today by being in charge of teams that are slaughtered. He had great success with Auckland and New Zealand "A". Since taking over from John Hart (the current All Blacks coach) in 1991, Henry's Auckland sides made 22 successful defences of the Ranfurly Shield and won the Super 12 in 1996 and 1997. A lot of people, including the RFU, were interested in Henry. Why would the 52-year-old former school-teacher throw up the chance of coaching the All Blacks and opt for a country that, in rugby terms, had plummeted to Third World status?

"The New Zealand RFU

told me I was next in line but there were no guarantees I'd get the All Blacks job even if I deserved it. The other candidates were ex-All Blacks - I wasn't. Even though I was born a South Islander I was considered an Auckland and there's a lot of hostility towards the city. Had I stayed I might have got the job. Who would have thought the All Blacks would lose five in a row? But if I didn't get it I'd have been a bitter and twisted old man." When Henry announced he was leaving New Zealand, the NZRFU said that in future no overseas coach would be considered for the All Blacks post. "It was a new clause in their constitution," Henry said. "If a player leaves he's out in the cold for a few years. I got life."

It took two months of courting from the WRU, a contract said to be worth £1.25m and the

freedom of Wales to convince Henry it could be an equitable life in the land of the long, dark cloud. "I not only have the opportunity to coach a national team but to work at the whole development. It's a total deal. England and France are way ahead of everybody else in Europe and we don't want the Five Nations to become a waste of time. I didn't come here to be a scapegoat and I'm sure the WRU wouldn't have appointed me if they weren't going to take note of what I'm saying. I've got five years and two World Cups and if that isn't enough I should be shot."

He has introduced a code of conduct, has hired the fitness expert Steve Black from Newcastle, has the squad training indoors - "no more running through the crap in weather as cold as hell" - and has changed the players' contracts. "They are common for all, not just the privileged few. I want an environment in which all the players have to do is think about playing rugby. No excuses. My job is to pick the best team and I have total freedom. I could pick an Eskimo if he was Welsh."

Henry is two months into his reign, almost two months into Welsh rain. "The weather's a negative but there are plenty of positives. I have been welcomed throughout Wales. I had a good feeling very quickly. They are good people, very similar to New Zealanders. When I started to coach the players I realised they had real ability. It would be fascinating to see them in the context of the Super 12. I think they would emerge as some of the best players in the world." This is welcome news, but news all the same, to the people of Wales.

It is for the next two Saturdays that John has Georgia, not to mention Romania, on his mind. "All I know about Georgia," said Henry, "is that they have lost one game in a year, and that was only 31-14 to Italy. They look set to take over from Romania as the main team in the old Eastern bloc. We have to take both threats seriously."

Johns set to lead the charge

Hugh Godwin says Ireland's new captain will never be found wanting

THERE WERE enough fireworks around the Paddy Johns residence on Thursday evening without the man of the house getting too excited over his predecessor as Ireland captain. Well, with a three-and-a-half year old son and a daughter of 18 months to keep amused, Bonfire Night is likely to be a noisy affair without any encouragement from Keith Wood.

In between the bangs and the flashes Johns considered the position of Wood. The Harlequins and Llanos hooker, having refused to sign the Irish Rugby Football Union contract offered to Ireland's foreign-based players, was this week omitted from the squad for the World Cup qualifiers to be played between 14-21 November.

It is the same contract that has been signed by Johns, of Saracens, nine fellow English-based Irishmen and Jeremy Davidson, currently at the French club Castres. Had any other player considered taking the Wood line? "The best answer I can give you," said Johns, "is that we have signed, Keith hasn't. It's not my job to judge on it. I just feel sorry for Keith and his family, because they're under a lot of strain."

"Keith came out to tour South Africa in the summer with his body in bits. He came because he was asked to and the amount of support he gave me as captain, I couldn't thank him enough for. It's important he sorts this out as quickly as possible, the team needs him."

The Rugby World Cup organisers, in a zealous effort to make the qualifying process as inclusive as possible, have pitted each of the home unions, with the exception of the hosts Wales, against two supposedly lesser nations. In each group the top two go through, and the third may make it via a repléage. You can't get much more inclusive than that.

So it is for the next two Saturdays that John has Georgia, not to mention Romania, on his mind. "All I know about Georgia," said Johns, "is that they have lost one game in a year, and that was only 31-14 to Italy. They look set to take over from Romania as the main team in the old Eastern bloc. We have to take both threats seriously."

A small army of antograph-hunting children descended on Ireland's unglamorous training camp near Cork in midweek. "Wood's sick," the youngsters were told, though they probably knew as well as anyone that the hooker was fit and well in London, as he had been since he realised it would be pointless to take the flight to Cork he had booked for last Sunday.

It is up to Johns to lead by example. And what an example he set in the Second Test in South Africa in June. Hitherto Johns' reputation had been one of unwavering but understated commitment. At Loftus Versfeld that day, Johns punctuated his play with stand-up fights involving, among others, his opposite number Gary Teichmann. It was the sustained nature of the violence that set the match apart, more so than any other high-level international since, perhaps, France v England in 1992.

Could there be a hangover when Teichmann's tourists come to Lansdowne Road in three weeks? "There was a lot you saw in that match," said Johns, "and a lot you couldn't see. As a player you can either lie down and take it, or you can stand up to it. It wasn't planned but the way things went early on, it was going to happen. They came out to intimidate us. I hope when we meet them this time it's a good clean game and good entertainment for the people who go and watch."

Johns' re-appointment as captain is a source of quiet pride for the 30-year-old Ulsterman. "I played my first cap with the team manager Donal Lenihan, in 1990, and my second cap with Phil Danaher, who is his assistant. The coach Warren Gatland is of a similar age, so we are all on the same wavelength. They know what the players want."

For the first time in his 10-month tenure of the job, Gatland has all his first-choice locks - Johns, Davidson, Malcolm O'Kelly and Mick Galwey - available for selection. He is unlikely to find Johns wanting.

The nations who need a starter for 10

WHATEVER else comes out of the batch of internationals fed by England and Wales over the next few weeks, and it bpe here's not a lot of gloom involved, it is essential that they both emerge with a firm hold at outside-half.

A successful World Cup campaign next year will depend on both being able to compete in a 15-man basis and that means having a good decision maker in the No 10 shirt. At the moment, neither team seemed to have this in their department and that could be fatal.

It's not that I am permanently biased towards the importance of stand-offs but the more I look at the modern game the more I see the need for creative thought. If you are to examine the three pre-

vious winners of the World Cup they each had a dominant controller in the position - Michael Lynagh for Australia, Grant Fox for New Zealand and Joel Stransky for South Africa.

Next year will not be any different, because these are still the men who win you matches. Harlequins are a case in point. They struggled through the first part of this season but Thierry Lacroix comes back and suddenly they look a good side again.

When you think of those who could do a similar job for England and Wales there's no one whose current form demands selection at outside-half for either of the national sides. I was discussing this point with the Quins coach,

Zinzan Brooke, last week and he expressed the view that many players in this country lack "the smell" for the game. They are undoubtedly fitter and faster but they are like robots. They have lost the instincts of their predecessors, and the number of genuine play-makers has dwindled.

It is an extremely good point but not much help to coaches Clive Woodward and Graham Henry and the only way they are going to get over the problem is to make a decision over the next game or two and stick with their choice. Given time and patience, the players concerned will have the chance to gather the necessary confidence and experience to do the vital job in 11 months' time.

Players do react to having the



JONATHAN DAVIES

faith of the coach and the team placed in them. As usual, New Zealand provide the perfect example of this. Back in the days when Franco Botica and Grant Fox were rivals for the No 10 All Blacks' shirt, Botica was the better runner and Fox the better kicker. In the end, the selectors favoured Fox, which caused Botica to turn to rugby league.

The selectors' faith in Fox was repaid when he blossomed into a great decision maker. But Botica, meanwhile, developed into a great kicker - which helps to prove that it is all about opportunity because if he had been the one the All Blacks chose, he would probably have been just as successful for them.

A similar situation exists now in New Zealand between Carlos Spencer and Andrew Mehrtens. The All Blacks tend to play them both which has been more of a hindrance than a help. Sooner or later, they must choose one of them to take the main decision-making role.

The problem facing England and Wales is not quite the same because they do not have people of that calibre but they still have time to allow someone to grow into the role. England

have the more difficult task because they have so little to go on. Paul Grayson seems to have been more on the bench than on the field for Northampton this season; Mike Catt has at least been playing at stand-off for Bath, but was preferred as a winger for England last summer; Jon Wilkinson is played in the centre by Newcastle; and Alex King of Wasps doesn't seem to be in the reckoning.

Woodward says he doesn't care what the clubs do but it surely helps if a man is playing the same position every week. This may suggest that he will go for Catt but I find it difficult to form an opinion. All I know is that Woodward has to put his faith in one of them and hope they still have time to allow someone to grow into the role. England

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against the likes of Holland and Italy, it will be a start.

In Wales, Neil Jenkins is under pressure because Pontypridd haven't been having a very good time and, with Arwel Thomas injured, there is speculation that Henry will switch newly-qualified Welshman Shane Howarth to outside-half. Howarth is a very good kicker so the move might be on.

However, Neil is well used to pressure and has shrugged it off to compile a great points record in internationals. Playing for Ponty hasn't been easy, so perhaps a move up to Wales will be just the breath of fresh air he needs. But, whoever gets the nod, if he shows the appetite for what is required in the World Cup he should be cemented into the job from now on.

Springboks have history on their minds

FORGET THE Lions' heroics in the Republic last year. South Africa have. Had Nick Mallett been the coach instead of the hapless Caryl du Plessis, it is doubtful if the Springboks would have lost a Test, let alone the series.

Soe belatedly taking control Mallett's Test record is played 13 won 13. Over the next few weeks his new model tourists play Wales, Scotland, Ireland and England. Should South Africa prevail, it would not only be the fastest Grand Slam imaginable but would create a world record. If they beat Wales at Wembley on Saturday, they will equal the South African Test record of 15 consecutive wins; if the others also fall, Springboks will eclipse New Zealand's world record

run of 17 international victories, which was set back in the 1960s.

There are 12,000 rugby coaches in South Africa and they picked Mallett. What is more, he is only 42. He is still learning. In the light of their record performances it would be tempting to suggest that South Africa are using a mallet to crack a nut. Compared to the southern hemisphere's Tri-Nations which, of course, South Africa won with a clean sweep, this eight-match tour looks like a stroll in the park.

"I regard the Tri-Nations as the hardest competition in the world," Mallett said. "To survive against Australia and New Zealand, home and away with in six weeks takes some doing. I didn't expect us to be unbeaten. We won two games by

one point and we had a bit of luck. Our record looks good but we have still got a lot of work to do. Technically, I think we are behind Australia and New Zealand. Our defence has been brilliant but we need to improve our attacking options."

If the Springbok was a horse it would be top weight in the handicap. Two factors might impede their record run: their schedule this year and their itinerary over the next month. With pre-season training back in January, the Super 12 series starting in February, visits to Ireland, Wales and England in the summer, followed by the Tri-Nations, they are entering their 11th month of continuous rugby.

"It's taken its toll," Mallett said. "There's been no time to rest. It's not a question of fitness but of keeping players focused and sharp."

Nor is he overjoyed with the logistics of the tour which has all the permanency of a dirty weekend.

Tim Glover finds the tourists have much to play for this month

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First up are Wales (recently beaten 96-13 in Pretoria) and their new coach Graham Henry. "At the time I described them as the weakest international side I had ever seen," Mallett said.

"They looked more like a club side. I kept bringing on fresh young players, who had the incentive of playing for Tri-Nations places, and the game got faster and faster. I always feel sorry for a team outclassed and I felt bad for the reputation of a country that was the best in the world in the 1970s. But there will be no comparison this time."

"I have never met Graham Henry, but I have tremendous respect for him. He is used to success and I'm sure he'll put together a formidable squad."

He played for Western

Province and twice for South Africa, but it is as a coach that his cosmopolitan background may have the most significant influence on Springbok rugby.

Fluent in French, Italian and Afrikaans, Mallett - he has three non-whites in his party - has coached in Italy, France and the less fashionable parts of Cape Town. "The perception that rugby in South Africa is played by guys from the highveld who do nothing but grunt is passé. These players want to mix, sell their country and sell rugby."

Between 18 and 38 Mallett spent 15 years overseas and it has given him a broader perspective of South Africa. During his travels he ran a bistro and a travel agency. That should make him a discerning tourist.

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Victims of the new world order

LOOKING BACK on his sixth Order of Merit victory, the one that was never a priority until it looked like being taken away at the last minute, Colin Montgomerie found a highly satisfying thought. "If," he said, "this is going to be the end of an era, with the game going more global, then it is nice to be the last No 1 of that era."

Montgomerie collected his sixth Harry Vardon Trophy a week ago after the Volvo Masters, which has been the finale to the European season for the last 11 years, and has spent the last few days in a flurry of activity, not least collecting his MBE at Buckingham Palace.

But this time next year Monty will be still hard at work. This Sunday in 12 months time will see the final day of the American Express Strokeplay Championship, the new season-ending event on all the world's tours. Whatever Montgomerie has done at Montecastillo and

Golf's fast-changing landscape is leaving Europe's pros in the rough. By Andy Farrell

David Duval at the US Tour Championship the previous week, their crowns as the European and American No 1s will still be up for grabs, especially with a pot of \$5m and a minimum of \$1m to the winner.

The double-headed end to the official season, which will be staged at Valderrama, has been introduced as one of the new World Golf Championships - three tournaments appearing on the schedule for the first time in response to calls for the best players in the world to meet more often.

They are being staged by the Federation of World Tours and the large prize funds - greater than the majors - and the fact that they will count on the Order of Merit are an attempt to give them instant credibility. They are elite tournaments with restricted fields, leaving

those in Europe who will not qualify unhappy.

The Valderrama event will feature the entire 30-man US Tour Championship field but only the top 20 on the European money list, as long as they are in the top-100 on the world rankings, which would have ruled out Mathias Grönberg (10th), Sven Struer (13th), Phillip Price (15th) and David Carter (19th) this year.

Ken Schofield, the executive director of the European Tour who had to face a three-hour players' meeting at Montecastillo, had no choice but to embrace the global expansion of the game. Perhaps Montgomerie is right and the relevance of the European rankings will fade as the world ranking becomes all important, but it is arguable that the European will be the more representative.

Not only the World Championships events but the US Open and the US PGA will be included on the Order of Merit for the first time next year. The US Masters will not be because Augusta continues its policy of inviting overseas players rather than endorsing exemption guidelines.

For sure, that means the European money race next year will be decided between the top players like Montgomerie and Lee Westwood - who now have no need to quit Europe to play in America full-time - but at least the battles will include those on the biggest stages in the biggest tournaments rather than be restricted to the playing fields of Europe.

Eligibility for the new tournaments, though not necessarily perfect, is at least based on performance, but the world

rankings play as important part. Recently, following a change four years ago that gave US tour events more weighting, Europeans have not shown up well, but the ranking is to be tinkered with again.

"It is not going to have an immediate effect but in time should tilt the pointer back towards Europe," said Schofield. Since only four men really know how the rankings work - one each at the European tour, the US tour and IMG, who administer them, and John Westwood, Lee's father and a retired maths teacher - we will have to wait and see.

The first new event will be the Andersen Consulting Matchplay Championship in San Diego in February and it will feature the top-64 players in the world ranking. Currently, that means around a dozen

Europeans and Faldo might only just squeeze in. If he does so in 64th place - he is 67th now - watch for him playing the world No 1 Tiger Woods.

As a result of Seve Ballesteros' lobbying, the Ryder Cup Committee are to consider capping the number of points available, which is usually on a point for pound basis. This is typical Ballesteros. When he was one of the few to play in the American majors, he lobbied successfully for their inclusion in the Ryder Cup table.

The next WGC event is the most unsatisfactory. It is transparently a backhanded way of paying Ryder Cup players as it is they, plus their Presidents' Cup counterparts from America and the Rest of the World, who will play in a four-round strokeplay event at Firestone in Akron, Ohio.

Not only will the wild card selections of the various captains - based on their ability to play in team matchplay competitions - earn a place in the new tournament but their qualification will be for two years until the next team is decided. The date is also wrong, for it follows two weeks after the US PGA Championship in Chicago and the week after the European Ryder Cup team is finalised in Munich.

The chances are that Europeans chasing a place in the team will be exhausted before they even get to Brookline for the Ryder Cup. The guiding hand of Tim Finchem, the US tour commissioner, is apparent and he has also made sure the American Express event detracts as little as possible from his own Tour Championship position as the season's finale in America.

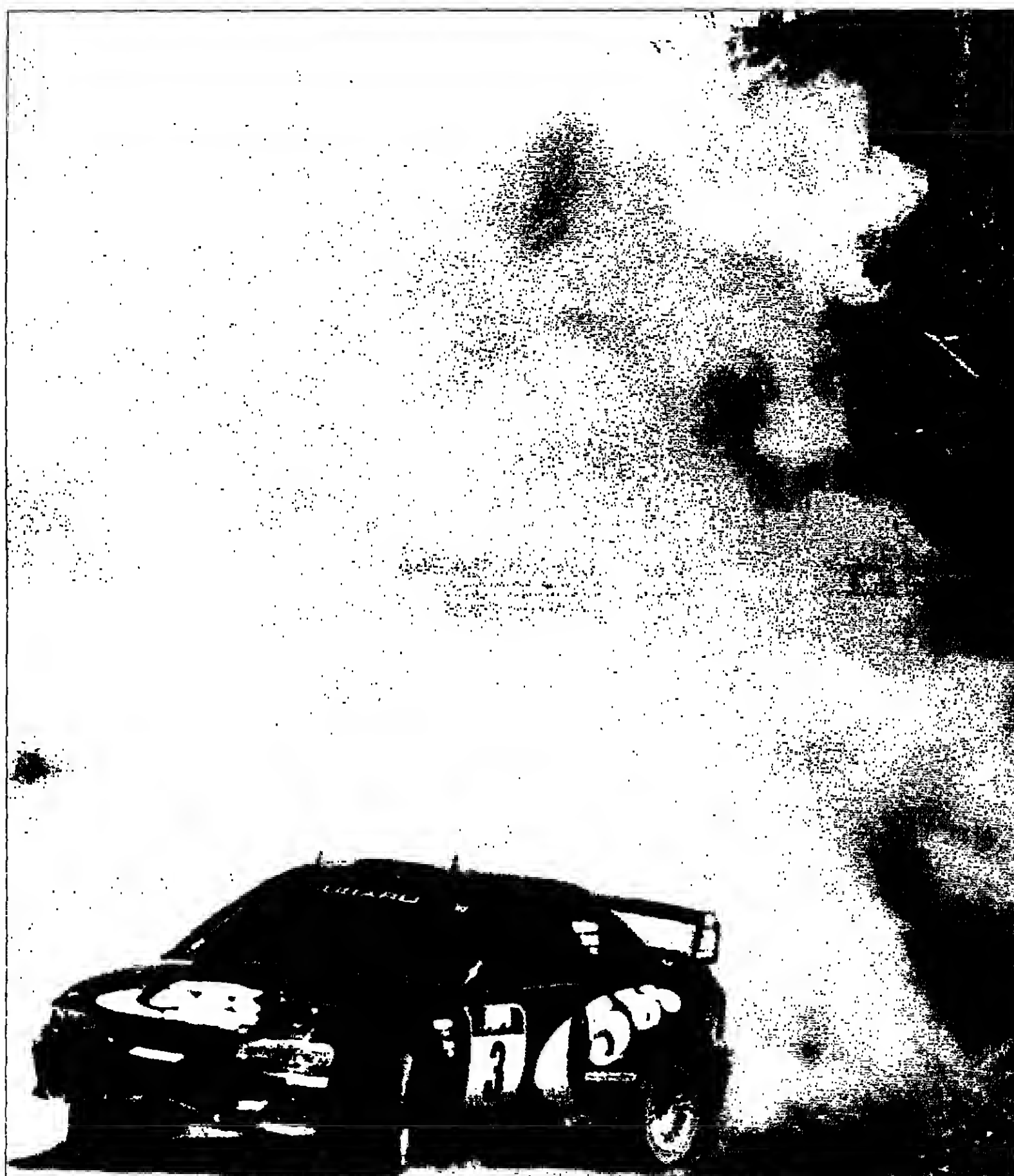
It will be played at Valderrama for three of the first four



Schofield: No opto

years, just down the road from Montecastillo. Naturally overshadowing the Volvo Masters. The Swedish car company's contract with the European Tour expires after next season and so far the only new is that discussions are taking place. Volvo might decide it is not worth specially staging a tournament if it is not going to be the finale to the ranking that they also sponsor. Instead, they could put the funds into other boosting the Volvo PGA Championship and making it long with the Players' Championship, WGC events in all but name. Welcome to the world tour.

Dust starts to fly as McCrae hits the trail Down Under



Kicking up a storm: Colin McCrae and his Subaru go in hot pursuit of the leaders in the Australian rally - report, Briefly page 2

JEAN MARIE BLANCHARD

Rusedski aims to have final word

BY RONALD ATKIN
in Paris

GREG RUSEDSKI stands on the brink of the victory of a lifetime at the Paris Open today. He faces the world number one, Pete Sampras, this afternoon to win one of the sport's most important titles after a rousing 6-3 4-6 6-4 semi-final win over Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

This will be Rusedski's fifth final of a year severely interrupted by his famously damaged ankle in the summer. He has won only one, in Antwerp last February, but will hope to disrupt a sequence of six straight losses to Sampras.

Rusedski has now won 28 matches indoors in 1998, the best total on the circuit, and over the past few days has rediscovered much of his old fluency and confidence. His net coverage and touch were of a particularly high order and compensated for serving which was indifferent by his normal standards. His 11 aces, which included one 134 mph projectile, were heavily discounted by nine double-faults.

Kafelnikov, who had put out Tim Henman and Marcel Rios in earlier rounds in some style, did not look the same player yesterday. He was broken the first time he stepped up to serve, but the outcome of the match hinged on a lapse of manners by the Russian, who had criticised Henman for the very same thing three days earlier.

In the second set, disappointed at being broken as he served for the set, he slammed a ball high into the 12,000 crowd at Bercy Stadium and was given a conduct warning by the umpire, Rudi Berger.

That was classed as "ball abuse" and, after he had levelled the match by winning the second set, he again went break point down in the opening game of the final set as Rusedski struck a perfect backhand down the line. This time the Russian buried his racket to the floor and broke it.

That was not only "racket abuse" but also, so to speak,

self-abuse; stupidity of the highest order. Berger had no option but to dock him a point for a second offence and award the game to Rusedski.

After that the British player had only to hold his serve for the rest of the set to run out the winner and he hung on confidently to earn a tilt for the first prize of \$393,000.

Oddly, if Kafelnikov had won this match it would have assured Tim Henman of a place in the eight-man field for the ATP World Championships in Hanover later this month. Rusedski's win keeps Henman



Looking good: Pete Sampras on his way to victory over Todd Martin yesterday

waiting a little longer, though the possibility of both British players getting to Hanover cannot yet be discounted.

Kafelnikov counted out the possibility of a Rusedski victory. "He has no chance. Pete is a great number one. If you give him an opportunity he never misses; he makes 100 per cent out of nothing," Rusedski does not quite see it that way, despite the 6-6 record. "Every one of my matches with Pete has been a good one. I have played some good tennis against him and just come up a bit short. It will be a question of who serves well

and who takes the chance. Hopefully I can do it."

Sampras, who beat Todd Martin 6-4 7-6, has enjoyed long-standing domination over his fellow-American. Thirteen matches and three and a half years have passed since Martin last beat him and there is an air of inevitability about their matches these days. Martin seems to know his place properly belongs in the shadow of the great man.

Certainly the raucous capacity crowd were firmly in the Sampras corner. This tournament is the Paris blue-collar event compared with the elegance of Roland Garros during the French Open and the audience give vent to their uninhibited feelings with yells, cat-calls and screams of approval or disapproval. Marcelo Rios had been jeered off after his lacklustre display on Friday but Sampras with his ailing back was a cherished favourite.

Late on Friday evening Sampras had taken out extra insurance in protection of his ranking by making a last-minute application for a wild card into the Stockholm tournament which begins tomorrow, the finale of the tournament season. It will be his sixth straight week in Europe.

"Mentally and physically it's been a long road trip and the body could use a rest," he said. "But I've got this goal of six consecutive years at number one that I want to achieve and if it means spending another week over here I'm willing to do that. It's a unique situation, something in tennis that might not ever be broken. If it doesn't happen it doesn't happen, but at least I gave myself the best chance possible."

Henman and Rusedski are seeded third and fourth for Stockholm. In the first round Rusedski faces the American-based German, Tommy Haas, while Henman plays the Swedish Mikael Tillström.

Gibbs runs riot

RUGBY UNION
BY PAUL TROW

JUST seven days after their heroic 13-11 victory over Bath, London Scottish were brought back to earth when they suffered a 76-5 defeat in their Anglo-Welsh friendly away to Swansea.

The Lions' centre, Scott Gibbs, ran in three of the All Whites' 12 tries while his Welsh international team-mate Colin Charvis helped himself to two. Lee Davies also scored a try and kicked eight conversions.

The Wales prop David Young was carried off in the sixth minute of Cardiff's 40-17 Anglo-Welsh home victory over West Hartlepool with ligament damage to his left knee which makes him doubtful for Saturday's Test against South Africa at Wembley. The 30-year-old tight-head said: "I've had a bit put on it and I'll have a scan tomorrow."

The Great Britain and St Helens rugby league wing, Anthony Sullivan, who is on a three-month contract, marked

his home debut with one of Cardiff's six tries. Even though yesterday's game was only his second in rugby union, 29-year-old Sullivan has already been drafted into the Wales squad by the coach Graham Henry.

The former Lions scrum-half Robert Jones, another making his home debut, also contributed a try as Cardiff cut loose after West had led 3-0 at half-time.

Diego Dominguez kicked 13 points against the country of his birth as he steered Italy to a 23-19 victory over Argentina in Piacenza yesterday. The Italians, who meet England in a World Cup qualifying game at Huddersfield a fortnight today, scored a try early in each half and then held off the visitors. Massimo Cuttitta came on for Italy as a replacement after half

an hour of the second half to earn his 60th cap and tie his country's record for Test caps. Llanelli, who won 34-27 away to Leinster on Friday night, were presented with a place in the last eight of the European Cup when they were confirmed as runners-up in Pool A by Slade Francis' 34-21 success over Begles-Bordeaux.

The most impressive British result in yesterday's European matches came in Pool C of the Shield with Bridgend seeing off their visitors, last season's Heineken Cup finalists Drive, 20-15. Caerphilly maintained their promising form with a 35-30 win at Newport in Pool A, but Aberavon went down 26-5 at home to Bourgoin in Pool B.

Bristol, with seven tries including a brace apiece from Ben Broeze and Adam Larkin, hammered Wakefield 46-15 to remain two points clear at the top of Allied Dunbar Premiership Two. Second-placed Worcester, still smarting from having two points deducted by the Rugby Football Union for fielding an ineligible player, bounced back with a 21-9 home win over the bottom club, Blackheath.

Cowenry stayed third after beating visitors Rotherham 22-12, with the division's leading points scorer, Steve Gough, adding another 12 to his season's tally. Meanwhile, the Australian rugby league back Wendell Sailor scored a try in his second game for Leeds, a 26-6 win at Fylde.



Gibbs: Hat-trick of tries

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP ONE

Gloucester	31	Bedford	21
Gloucester	31	Bedford	21
Gloucester	31	Bedford	21
Gloucester	31	Bedford	21
Gloucester	31	Bedford	21

Leicester	26	Bath	13
Leicester	26	Bath	13
Leicester	26	Bath	13
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Leicester	26	Bath	13
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Leicester	26	Bath	13

RUGBY UNION RESULTS

Gloucester	31	Bedford	21
Gloucester	31	Bedford	21
Gloucester	31	Bedford	21
Gloucester	31	Bedford	21
Gloucester	31	Bedford	21

Leicester	26	Bath	13
Leicester	26	Bath	13
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Leicester	26	Bath	13
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Leicester	26	Bath	13
Leicester	26	Bath	13

LEAGUE TWO NORTH

Asquith	34	Hindley	23
Asquith	34	Hindley	23
Asquith	34	Hindley	23
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Asquith	34	Hindley	23

LEAGUE TWO SOUTH

Barking	20	Clifton	6
Barking	20	Clifton	6
Barking	20	Clifton	6
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WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION

Blackwood	19	Maesteg	2
Blackwood	19	Maesteg	2
Blackwood	19	Maesteg	2
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Blackwood	19	Maesteg	2

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Blackwood	19	Maesteg	2
Blackwood	19	Maesteg	2

ANGLO-WELSH MATCHES

Swansea	76	London Scottish	5
Swansea	76	London Scottish	5
Swansea	76	London Scottish	5
Swansea	76	London Scottish	5
Swansea	76	London Scottish	5

Swansea	76	London Scottish	5
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Swansea	76	London Scottish	5
Swansea	76	London Scottish	5
Swansea	76	London Scottish	5

TENNIS'S VELVET PREMIER FIRST DIVISION

Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1

Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1

Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1
Boroughmuir	1	Curle	1

SECOND DIVISION

Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1

Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
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Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
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Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1
Aberdeen G&P	16	Gala	1

INTERNATIONAL MATCH

Italy	23	Argentina	15
Italy	23	Argentina	15
Italy	23	Argentina	15
Italy	23	Argentina	15
Italy	23	Argentina	15

Italy	23	Argentina	15
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Italy	23	Argentina	15
Italy	23	Argentina	15

The harming of Hamed's image

After a lacklustre fight night in the US, Prince Naseem must start listening to other experienced voices. By Bob Mee

TEMPTS are already under way to seal the gaping holes in Naseem Hamed's public image. The plastering is done, the paper's on, now all that's needed is time and a little bit of warmth and nobody will know there was any damage in the first place.

The movers and shakers around the truculent 24-year-old featherweight champion have, no doubt, dealt with the problems posed by last week's Atlantic City adventure in different ways. Some will deny there was ever a difficulty, that it was a fiction inspired by an antagonistic media. Some will lay the blame for what was, in Britain at least, a public-relations disaster, anywhere but at their own door. Some will play others off against each other in order to tighten their grip on Hamed, who remains a marketable item in spite of his bad behaviour in his brief stay on the New Jersey coast.

In the scramble, some will undoubtedly be hurt. The one sure thing is that Hamed will remain with the American cable network, HBO, who issued a fax last week declaring his dull points win over Wayne McCullough in Atlantic City was actually a resounding success. HBO's Lou Di Bella eoded the fax confirming their satisfaction with their British investment by declaring: "Count us among those who love him."

Hamed surrounds himself with admirers, none of whom show any signs of having ever argued with him. It's been said that the only man who can give him orders is his father, Sal. Nothing wrong with that, but he should have other people to whom he will listen, and those people must have experience to deal with tough, tricky situations.

His fall-out with his trainer and mentor, Brendan Ingle, is

now well documented. Ingle was still in the corner last week, but was Hamed listening to him? Will they still be together when he boxes again, perhaps in February?

There is uncertainty, too, over the future of his relationship with Frank Warren, whose promotional hold on him was relaxed for this fight because of his own business difficulties. Financial restraints in place pending the outcome of his own dispute with his former partner Don King led to a reduction in Warren's formal role in Atlantic City, where he was a consultant to the promoter of licence Cedric Kushner. He remained a high-profile presence, however, and back in England said he himself had had no cross words with his young champion.

There was a brief claim in a national newspaper earlier in the week that Hamed camp



Hamed: Arrogant behaviour

might consider "one-to-one" interviews with critics. Any possibility of interpreting that as a possible peace offering disappeared with the rider that they believed the criticism had been orchestrated. This is palpable nonsense. His team should get it straight in their heads that the reaction against him was a di-

rect result of his own appallingly arrogant behaviour.

As someone who arrived in town late to find a welling anger among the normally calm British press said: "How on earth can he have upset so many people in such a short time?" How, indeed.

His delayed arrival, following an amateurish problem with a work permit, annoyed Bally's Hotel and Casino, who had shelled out a substantial amount of hard cash in site fees, and who understandably wanted a serious return on the outlay. At the final press conference, a Bally's spokesman spoke plainly of their disappointment. The fight drew just over 8,000 in a 15,000 capacity arena.

When he did arrive, instead of playing the situation calmly and sensibly, Hamed was confrontational. He was rude to several journalists, spoke with astonishing insensitivity about

McCullough, who is from Belfast, needing a machine gun or an Uzi in the ring, and when asked by an American writer if he wished to modify the statement, replied coldly: "Next."

At least one British journalist questioned Sky's decision to screen his vitriolic personal attack on Colin Hart of the *Sun*. However, whether he liked it or not, the media had become part of the story.

I should declare my own position. I have worked as a freelance member of the Sky boxing team for eight years. In that time, indeed in television work dating back to 1984, I cannot remember another main-event fighter refusing a live promotional interview 48 hours before the show. Yet Hamed did so to Sky, when the point of this was largely promoting pay-per-view sales, and so in turn was helping increase his own financial reward. Whatever the

reason for it, his decision was inappropriate.

Commercially, Hamed remains viable - one dull fight does not destroy a man who has been mostly explosive and charismatic - but it has long been proven that financial backing hinges on image. A decade ago, Mike Tyson lost sponsors because of a remark about wanting to drive an opponent's nose into the base of his brain. They did not come back. This year, we have seen what a bad press can do to a man as revered as Will Carling once was.

I would not want Hamed to bite his tongue and hide his feelings every moment of the day, but the lack of professionalism he showed in Atlantic City portrayed him as a man with little or no compassion for those outside his immediate family and sycophantic entourage. And that's a shame, because it's probably not the case.

United sign up soiled worms

FISHING LINES
KEITH ELLIOTT

ANY COMPANY willing to pay £12m for an employee who works only about three hours a week clearly has more money than sense. So I had a quiet chuckle when I heard that Manchester United had forked out £325 for 5,000 worms. Outrageous. Fancy paying 15p for a worm. Alex Ferguson might be a whizz on the transfer market, but he has paid way over the odds for his latest signings.

It's true that their role is slightly less glamorous than that of Beckham, Yorke or Giggs. They don't for example, get the chance to go out with a Spice Girl. But it is, nonetheless, a vital position. The worms (of the type called reds, you will not be surprised to hear) have been recruited to put some backbone into the club's pitch at Old Trafford. Joining the ground staff, you might say.

According to a story in the *Angler's Mail*, the worms were called in by the head groundsman, Keith Kent, who said: "We have a root zone that is 92 per cent sand, so we can pass water through it quickly." He could probably have phrased it better, but you know what he meant. Very important, drainage, especially if you live in Manchester. Kent spotted the worms at a local pet shop, liked their style and was soon talking terms with the owner.

The worms are now happily burrowing in the hallowed turf, enjoying an existence that others of their kind can only dream about. The pitch is 116 yards by 76 yards, which gives each worm... er, well, I won't bother you with the maths.

It seems a little churlish to point out that Kent could have bought 32,500 worms for the same price, if he had approached any one of the several bait farms that specialise in worm-breeding to supply anglers. It's infra dig to shovel earth in your garden these days. All you need to do is pop along to a fishing shop and buy a tub-fill. It's much less effort, more hygienic and certainly safer. My brother still bears scars on his foot where he plunged a fork into the ground, and instead impaled his foot.

Worms have suddenly become big business. For years, they were dismissed as a bait used only by kids. Now they are back in favour with fishers and fish. In these days of high-tech baits, made with just the correct balance of amino acids, essential oils and sweeteners, it's refreshing to discover that you don't need a chemistry degree to catch fish.

The great thing about worms is that they will catch pretty well anything that swims, from sticklebacks to salmon. It's all a matter of being adaptable. There's probably even a book out there: *101 Things To Do With a Jar of Worms*. Let me give you an example. One rose involves taking a syringe and injecting the worm with air. This makes it float. When fishing in weedy lakes, a pumped-up worm wriggles above vegetation rather than hiding among it. The fish can see it, and your hook doesn't get tangled. Clever, huh?

Even more fiendish is a trick to catch eels. (Those with a delicate disposition should skip this paragraph.) First, take a bundle of worms and stick them in a liquidiser, preferably when your wife is out of the house. While you're at it, borrow one of her sanitary towels. Head for a likely eel spot and tie the sanitary towel on your line, after soaking in worm juice. Tie on a hook (baited with a worm, of course), and cast it out. In an assured that it attracts eels from miles away.

Very versatile, the worm. However, being adopted by fishermen has a definite downside: you get eaten by fish, one way or another. A job with Manchester United seems an infinitely better bet. Kent revealed that his transfer deal almost didn't go through because the new boys were not clean enough (rather like the Brian Clough days at Nottingham Forest, when every player had to have a short back and sides). Kent said: "They came in the worst black soil I've seen. We had two lads with buckets washing every one before we put them on the pitch." That's what I call luxury - a club where even the stadium's worms have their own bath attendants. Beats being impaled on a hook, doesn't it?

Morning glory in Kentucky brings a wash and brush up in preparation for the Breeders' Cup



Horse play: The American filly Three Ring enjoys a cooling shower after an early workout in preparation for last night's Breeders' Cup races at Churchill Downs, Kentucky

MATTHEW STOCKMAN/SPORT

Yavana's Pace makes his class count

CLASS TOLD: Yavana's Pace, the top weight, landed the November Handicap over a mile and a half at Doncaster yesterday as the Flat turf season drew to a close. Yavana's Pace was sent to the front over two furlongs out by Darryl Holland, his jockey, and never looked like being caught.

Carly Quest, last on the home turn, finished powerfully to be beaten one and a quarter lengths in second. Dato Star, the 9-2 favourite, under pressure from a loog way out, was third.

Mark Johnston, Yavana's Pace's trainer, said: "Yavana's Pace is a special horse and I always thought he was the right type for this race. When he ran at Beverley for me first time he struck me then as being similar to Quick Ransom who this race in 1993."

Yavana's Pace may go hurdling, Johnston added: "We said if he ran badly here we wouldn't consider it, but now he's won it's a possibility. But he's only going to go hurdling if we think he can go all the way to Cheltenham. He's schooled

over hurdles in Ireland but we wouldn't be taking any chances and he would be properly prepared at home."

Coral quote Yavana's Pace at 20-1 for the 1999 Champion Hurdle.

Joe Tizzard and Timmy Murphy rode an 8-1 treble and 200-1 four-timer at Cheltenham and Sandown respectively. Six of those were trained by Paul Nicholls, who sent out seven winners in all at odds of 1288-1. Tizzard was successful on Callig Wild, Irbee and Nearly An Eye. Murphy won on Laredo,

third last fence under Norman Williamson and went on to beat Menesonic by eight lengths. Williams said: "He is in the Hennessy, but he could go for the Becher Chase the week before at Aintree with the thought that he may eventually be a National horse."

The absence of Fiddwell, withdrawn lame, meant the Tanglefoot Elite Hurdle lost its flavour. But Grey Shot made all for Jamie Osborne and Toby Balding to score by 10 lengths from Bellator. Balding said: "He could go for the Murphy's

Hurdle at Cheltenham next weekend. On the Flat he didn't take his races too quickly, but we'll think about it. I don't know if he is a Champion Hurdle horse, he could be a two and a half mile."

Rupert Wakley was suspended for 10 days (16-21 & 23-26 November) for mistaking the Tanglefoot Elite Hurdle for the second 100 Pound Hound in the 1.40. Wakley dropped his hands four strides from the post on Ian Williams' 6-5 favourite, who went down by a half length to Not For Parrot.

The trainer Kim Bailey, who won the Grand National in 1990 with Mr Frisk and sent out Alderbrook and Master Oats to win the Champion Hurdle and Cheltenham Gold Cup respectively in 1996, has been bailed over allegations he conspired to commit burglary. Lambourn-based Bailey is due to answer bail on 17 December. The arrests followed secret surveillance after police had been contacted by Jamie Osborne, recently cleared during on-going race-fixing and doping inquiries.

1.40: 1. NOT FOR PARROT (A Thornton) 7-1, 2. Powder Hound (S. J. Taylor) 11-4, 3. Jet Set (S. J. Taylor) 11-4, 4. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 5. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 6. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 7. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 8. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 9. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 10. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 11. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 12. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 13. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 14. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 15. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 16. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 17. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 18. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 19. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 20. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 21. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 22. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 23. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 24. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 25. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 26. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 27. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 28. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 29. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 30. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 31. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 32. P. H. (P. Nicholls) 11-4, 33. P. H. (P. 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PERSONAL FINANCE

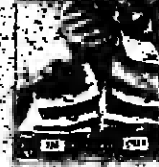
Streetwise shopper: the case for renting hi-tech equipment



The third extract from the best-selling investment



How far can insurers go in checking the risk of disease?



Wedding stake: Lindsay Slaney-Parker paid for the Big Day by saving money each month. MYKEL NICOLAOU

Put a bit to one side

It's easy to live for the moment, but you should get into the swing of regular saving

BY SARAH JAGGER

ONLY half the adults in this country have any savings at all. If you are not one of them then you are missing out on a secure future.

"It's especially important for people in their twenties to start saving now," says Julie Lord, certified financial planner with Cavendish Financial Management. "There won't be the state provision that was in place for their parents."

When you start work you should pay off any debts and then start a savings plan.

"You should aim to set aside 10 per cent of your take home pay each month in a savings account," says Ms Lord. "To get you into the habit of regular saving, you should set up a standing order to your savings account."

The earlier you start, the better, but don't worry if you have reached your thirties without savings. Start now.

Eventually your savings fund should be big enough to divide into two parts: an emergency fund between £500 and £3,000, left untouched where you can get easy access to it, and a separate fund for expenses such as a deposit on a house or for buying appliances and furniture.

You don't have to queue up for hours to open an account. They are available over the phone from supermarkets, retailers, insurance companies, banks and building societies. If you're new to saving, the most basic type of savings account is an instant access one. You put in the money and earn interest monthly or annually. You can withdraw it at any time without giving notice. These accounts usually have interest linked to the amount you invest. Nationwide's InvestDirect pays 7.0 per cent gross on balances of £1 to £5,000 and comes with a cashcard.

Monthly income accounts pay out interest monthly. They often set a high minimum investment, typically around £2,500 but Woolwich Premier Plus 2 Year Bond pays 6.31 per cent monthly on £500. Notice accounts require you to tie your money up and give notice of 30, 60, 90 or 180 days, or longer. You can withdraw money without notice but if you do there are penalties, usually a loss of interest equivalent to the notice period.

of the supermarkets or Standard Life. It pays 7.35 per cent on £1 or more. Fixed-rate accounts pay a set interest rate for a fixed period. For example, Portman Building Society's Fixed Interest Bond pays 6.75 per cent interest on balances over £1,000 invested for a year. But fixed-rate accounts levy high penalty charges if you withdraw your money early. Once you've decided which of these accounts suits you best, you

There are tax-free ways to save, but at the moment this involves tying your money up for five years in a Tessa account. If you are still young and have not bought a house yet, then this may not be the best idea. Hang on until April, when we will all be able to save £1,000 a year tax-free in a bank or building society account. This is part of the government's ISA (Individual Savings Account) plans.

National Savings products may not be the most exciting investments but they do specify the interest you will receive and the amount of time you need to tie up your money. Fixed-interest Savings Certificates and Index-linked Savings Certificates both offer guaranteed, tax-free returns for five years. This makes them particularly useful for higher-rate taxpayers looking for a safe investment. You can get account details and forms from post offices or by ringing 0645 645000.

Once you have a pot of savings, you should think about moving some onto the stock market. You can invest as little as £25 a month into a savings plan which buys you a range of shares.

You can buy shares using unit or investment trusts. These are professionally managed funds that pool your money with that of other investors and use it to buy a range of shares. If you want to find out more, the investment industry trade bodies AITC and Autif produce useful leaflets. • Contacts: AITC, 0171-431 5222; Autif, 0181-207 1361; egg, 0845 600 0292; National Savings, 0645 715401; Nationwide BS, 0500 302011; Portman BS, 0800 807080; Standard Life, 0345 555657; Woolwich, 0800 606040.

• Sarah Jagger writes for 'Moneywise' magazine.

A reason to save

Lindsay Slaney-Parker (left) from Fleetville, realises the importance of saving regularly but admits it is easier to save when you have got a goal. Lindsay, 28, works in marketing for a large publishing firm. She and her husband, Paul, 38, a computer specialist, spent £15,000 of their savings on their wedding and honeymoon.

December 1996, we had £3,000 in a joint savings account. We worked out how much every thing was going to cost and started saving £700 a month. Now we're married, we've decided to save at least £500 a month. We're also moving most of our savings to a 90-day notice account to get a better return, but we'll keep £3,000 set aside for emergencies.

Postal accounts are run as instant access or notice accounts, but operate by post and phone. They offer higher interest rates because they are cheap to administer. The Prudential's egg instant access postal account, which can also be operated by phone and internet, pays the highest rate of interest: 8 per cent for balances between £1 to £250,000. But egg has had some teething problems, and there may be a delay in getting your account up and running. If you want to open an account quickly you could try one

should then shop around for the best interest rates. You can keep an eye on rates using Moneyfacts. Its fax service is updated daily on 0336 400238. Calls cost 50p per minute.

If you already have a savings account, for example one that was set up for you when you were a child, check it has not become obsolete, meaning it is not accepting new money. If it is no longer available to new savers, it may be paying a low rate of interest. Ask the bank or society to move your money to a better account.

How do I ensure that two really is company?

I am hoping to set up a small website business with a friend. I live in London and he lives in Scotland. Should we set up as a partnership or a limited company?

BT, LONDON

The short answer is that you should get advice from a bank or accountant. Your decision will depend on a variety of factors. If you opt to become a partnership, the tax position is akin to being a sole trader, although you will have to fill in one partnership tax return as well as your own individual tax returns. Although the legal position of a partnership is different from being a sole trader, in practice you may not notice

much difference. For example, partnerships and sole traders have the same unlimited liability, whereas if a limited company gets into financial trouble only the assets of the company are at risk, not your personal assets.

The key factor could be whether you expect to generate a lot of profits. If you set up a limited company, you will become employees of that company. You can then decide your own salary and any dividends to be paid out on your shares.

Any profits you make that you keep within the company will be subject to corporation tax, currently 21 per cent and falling to 20 per cent next April

on companies making profits of £300,000 or less.

This could mean less tax to pay than if you paid out all the money in the form of salaries or dividends.

On the other hand, National Insurance contributions will be higher because you will have to pay both employer's and employees' contributions. But you will get better benefits than from being a sole trader or partner. You will become entitled to unemployment benefit and, perhaps more importantly, you will build up entitlement to Serps - the state earnings-related pension. And, as a limited company, you will be able to establish an employer's pension scheme, which will effectively

allow you to pay in more by way of pension contributions than if you were a partnership.

However, if you are unlikely to have enough spare cash to pay even the maximum limits for a personal pension, this may be only a theoretical benefit.

You will have to take account of the extra costs of a limited company, for example the legal setting up of the company and meeting the various require-



ments such as an annual audit of the accounts.

This really is only a flavour of some of the issues. Do get advice. A useful introduction is found in NatWest Bank's *The Business Start-up Guide*, free from NatWest branches.

EAR today

I have seen an advertisement for a current account that quotes a monthly interest rate on authorised overdrafts and then expresses the monthly rate as an "EAR".

The EAR, presumably an annualised rate, is inevitably higher than the monthly rate multiplied by 12. But how does this EAR differ from the APR?

ML, LIVERPOOL

Are you familiar with the concept of CAR, "the compound annual rate" of interest on savings accounts? If the account pays 8 per cent a year and interest is added to the account just once a year, the annual rate you receive is 8 per cent. But if interest is paid every six months, you get 4 per cent twice a year. The second payment will include some interest on the interest paid after the first six months. This pushes up the

overall amount of interest you receive; in this case the CAR would be 8.16 per cent.

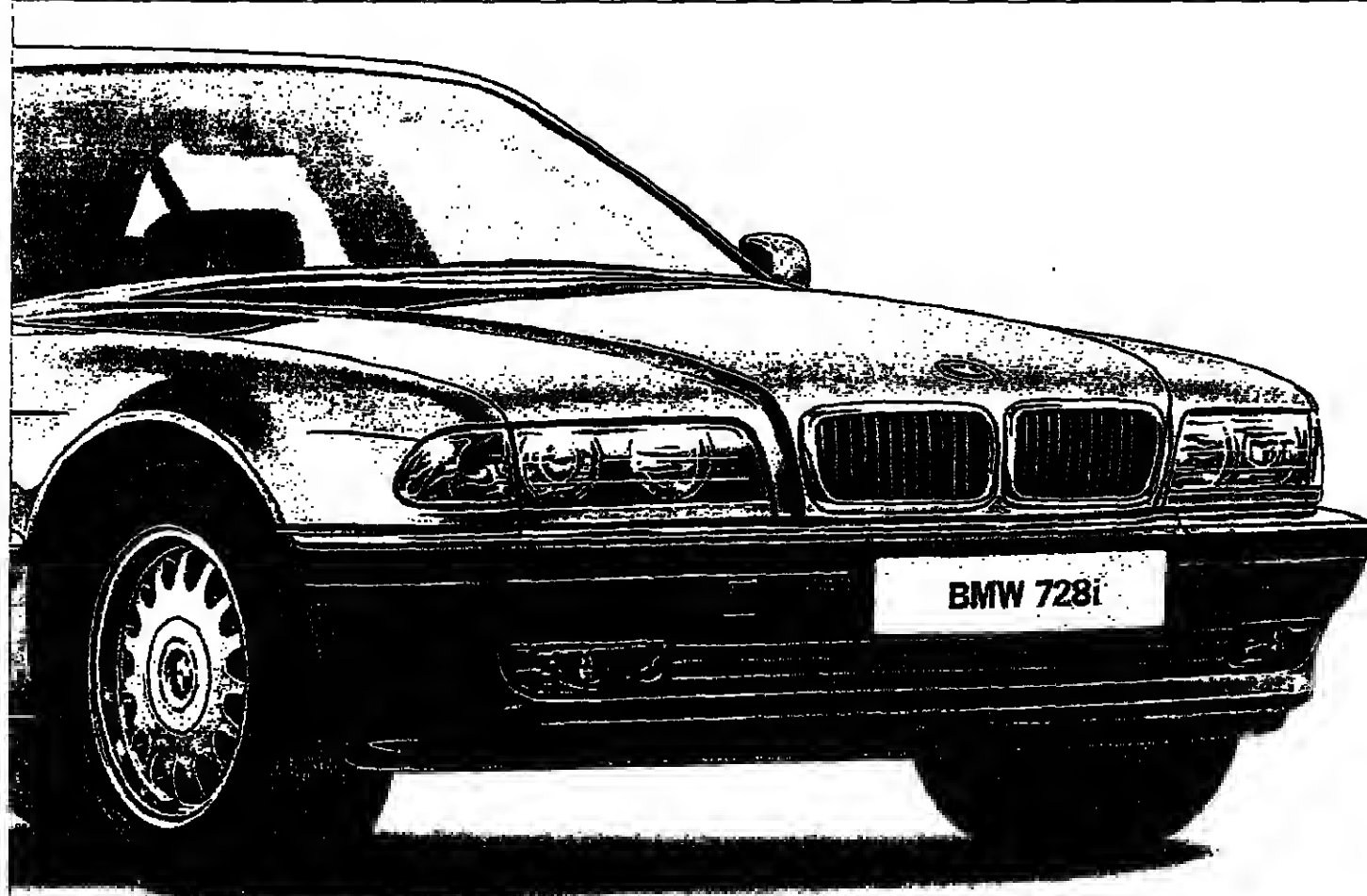
An EAR works along the same lines and is used to show the interest rate on borrowing. If interest is debited monthly and you don't pay off an overdraft you'll be charged interest on interest. The cost of borrowing is expressed as an EAR - effective annual rate. The EAR is commonly used to express the rate of interest on current account overdrafts.

By contrast, an APR - annual percentage rate - takes account of all the unavoidable costs of borrowing. It is only a very rough guide and has received much criticism. However, the EAR is po-

tentially even more misleading. Current accounts often carry monthly fees. If these are factored in to produce an APR the APR can be considerably higher than the EAR, especially on small overdrafts. Treat both the APR and the EAR with some caution.

• Write to the personal finance editor, Independent on Sunday, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, and include a phone number; or fax 0171-293 2096; or e-mail i.berwick@independent.co.uk

Do not enclose SAs or any documents you wish to be returned. We cannot give personal replies, nor can we guarantee to answer letters. We accept no legal responsibility for advice given.



The cost of living?

£429 a month (APR 9.6%)*

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The pension problem that won't go away

LAST week's 0.5 per cent drop in interest rates is welcome news for home owners paying standard interest rates and for anyone looking for a new fixed-rate mortgage. On the downside, we'll get less interest on savings.

But there is a much more serious problem with low interest rates. And it hits us

when we are most vulnerable – in retirement. A low interest rate climate means many people coming up to retirement will have far less to live on than they'd expected.

But this isn't just a problem for older people: interest rates are likely to go much lower in the next few years, so it's time for everyone to take notice of

this threat. Most workers no longer have access to a generous company pension that will pay out a retirement income equal to two-thirds of their working salary after 20 years' service.

Instead, many of us have to pay into our own pension fund – either through our employer or as a personal pension –

which grows (we hope) into a decent lump sum. After retiring, most people can't afford to live off their invested capital, so they sell the pension fund and buy a contract to provide an annual income, called an annuity. The rule of thumb used to be that each £100,000 of pension fund could be swapped for about £10,000 per year.

But we are living longer – which means less cash each year in retirement. And annuity prices are directly linked to both interest rates and the income from bonds issued by the Government (called gilts). A low interest rate means investors also get a low income from gilts.

A pensions specialist, Feather & Greenwood, estimates that a 65-year-old man with a substantial pension fund of £300,000 will now get just £21,000 a year (net of basic rate tax) or less than £17,000 for a 40 per cent taxpayer (this example is for an annuity contract with a five-year guarantee, and no annual increase in income). A man aged 65 buying an annuity today would need a fund

32 per cent larger than he would have needed in mid-1994 to buy the same level of income. What's being done about this long-term, potentially devastating problem? Nothing. Most pension providers and the Government are simply ignoring it in the hope it will go away. It won't. el.berwick@independent.co.uk



ISABEL BERWICK

Oh no – we're all going to die

IF YOU listened to insurance companies you might have difficulty getting out of bed in the morning. Their sales pitch presents a world where we are in danger of a disaster that will destroy our health, happiness and financial security. Only insurance can save the day.

Motor insurance and buildings cover for home owners are essential, but what about all those other policies? Which are worth the money and which are a waste of time? We've looked at some of the heavily promoted products, and worked out when you should pay up for peace of mind – and when it's better to keep your cash.

Life insurance

Why? Pays a lump sum if the policyholder dies. Essential for those with children or other dependants. Couples with a joint commitment such as a mortgage should also have cover.

Sales pitch. "Peace of mind from just 30 pence a day."

Cost. Term life insurance pays out a lump sum if you die within a set period of time, usually 25 years (to cover your mortgage). Someone aged 30 wanting £70,000 should pay less than £10 a month.

Drawbacks. Many people underinsure. Buying £100,000 of cover sounds a lot, but once the mortgage is cleared it will leave very little for surviving relatives. Cover for 10 times your income (or joint income) is ideal, though four or five times joint income is better than nothing.

Verdict. Term insurance is a good-value product that is actually getting cheaper. Whole-of-life cover, which includes an investment element and pays out when you die, is falling in popularity: the trend these days is to keep insurance and investment separate.

Private medical cover Why? Provides private medical treatment for acute illnesses. Helps you beat NHS waiting lists for hospital operations and rest in a private room.

Sales pitch. "Once an expensive luxury, now it is not just for the wealthy."

Cost. £30 to £70 a month for a family of four buying basic cover, rising to between £80 and £150 for comprehensive policies. Premiums rise rapidly with age. Basic cover may exclude outpatient cover or limit treatment to a small number of hospitals. You can also cut premiums by paying an excess on any claim.

Drawbacks. Pre-existing

Insurers would have us take out policies for every eventuality, but is the risk worth the cost? asks Harvey Jones

medical conditions will be excluded for at least two years. Policies are complex, unregulated and difficult to understand. Many people are unaware of the level of cover they have actually bought until it is time to claim. And premiums just keep on rising.

Verdict. Fine for those who can't wait for treatment – the self-employed, for example. GPs now have a lot more power, so if you have an excellent doctor's practice you've won half the battle. Medical insurance is one for the wealthy.

Mortgage protection

Why? Mortgage payment protection plans take care of your monthly repayments if you become sick, disabled or unemployed. Protects your house against repossession if you fall on hard times.

Sales pitch. "Have you considered what would happen to your home if you fell ill?"

Cost. Typically £5 or £6 per £100 of monthly mortgage payment.

Drawbacks. Self-employed and contract workers will have difficulty getting cover. Pre-existing medical conditions are excluded. Policies pay out for a maximum of one year.

Verdict. A poor product that needs improving. You would do better having an emergency fund to tide you over. The Government is considering making this type of cover compulsory for new borrowers.

Income protection

Why? Also called permanent health insurance, this provides a regular monthly income for those too ill to continue working. If you are seriously ill, benefits could be paid for many years, right up to retirement. It is intended to provide more extended ill-health cover than that offered by severely eroded state sickness benefits.

Sales pitch. "You have insured your car, home and holiday, but what about the income that pays for these pleasures?"

Cost. Around £30 a month at

age 25, rising to as much as £100 a month in your 50s. Costs can be kept down by deferring payment of benefits for up to six months or longer.

Drawbacks. Increasingly expensive with age, although you should be able to buy a policy that keeps premiums at the same level for as long as you keep paying into the scheme.

Be careful to take cover for your "own occupation". This means the insurance will pay out if you can't go back to your old job. Otherwise the insurer may only pay you if you are unable to do any job. If you stay healthy, you will never see a return for all those years of premiums.

Verdict. The self-employed and those without company sickness cover should consider income protection. It is expensive, and many prefer to take their chances. This is understandable but risky if you are the sole earner or have a family to support.

Critical illness cover

Why? Provides a lump sum on diagnosis of a serious illness such as heart attack, cancer, kidney failure or stroke. The money can be spent on anything you choose – to clear the mortgage, pay for carers, or to have a holiday. Commonly sold with mortgage endowment policies.

Sales pitch. "You are three times more likely to suffer a critical illness than die before 65."

Cost. Monthly premiums start at £25 for someone under 35 wanting £100,000 of cover, rising to £60 by the late 40s.

Drawbacks. Check carefully which illnesses are covered, as policies differ. This is not life insurance, so if you die within 14 or 28 days of diagnosis (depending on the policy), there is no payout. Only a few policies have an investment element, so if you don't claim, there is no other return.

Verdict. Simple to understand, with an attractive lump sum if you claim – which explains its recent popularity. If you have a family history of serious early illness, such as cancer, it may push up the premiums you are charged.

Long-term care cover

Why? Meets the costs of nursing or residential care for the elderly who can no longer cope on their own. Nursing homes can easily cost more than £1,000 a month but the state will not provide if you have assets of more than £16,000, including your home. Around 40,000 homes are sold each year to meet bills.



Help! In a world where disaster threatens, only insurance can save us, say its providers

Sales pitch. "One in four of us will need care at some stage in our life."

Cost. Around £30 a month at age 50, rising to more than £70 a month after 70. Can also be bought with a one-off premium of between £7,000 and £10,000.

Drawbacks. Once you enter a home your life expectancy is limited, so much of your estate should survive anyway. Premiums are expensive and if you remain healthy you could pay them for many years without getting any return.

Verdict. May appeal to people without close relatives or a family history of heart attacks, strokes or disability. But that one in four figure probably overstates the danger and cover is expensive. The Government is reviewing its policy on long-term care, so unless your needs are pressing it is worth waiting to see what happens. A government-backed deal will almost certainly be better value than what's available now.

The Index-Tracking PEP

Source: Mactrop LG&M, Legal & General PEPs. All Share Index-Tracking PEPs on an after-tax basis based on all PEP charges with gross income reinvested from 01.11.95 (since launch) to 02.11.98. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. From 01.11.98, tax credits on UK dividend distributions will only be able to be reclaimed by PEPs at a reduced rate of 10% (both capital and income values may be drawn as well as up and you can not get back the amount received. Full terms details are available on request. All statements are correct as at 02.11.98. The Government have announced that contributions can only be made to PEPs until April 1999. From that date a new tax provision (Savings Bonds) will replace the PEPs. The new tax provision will be available for legal & General (Invest) Limited. Registered in England No. 202790. Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 4TF. Representative of the Legal & General Group, members of which are regulated by the Financial Services Authority and FSA for the purposes of recommendations, advice on and selling life assurance and investment products bearing Legal & General's name.

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www.scottishwidows.co.uk

*Source: Mactrop 2.8.93-3.8.98, lump sum, sterling, offer at bid prices, gross income re-invested. 539 funds in survey. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. The value of units and the income from them can go down as well as up and is not guaranteed. The value of the tax advantages of a PEP depends on personal circumstances. For your protection calls to Scottish Widows may be recorded or monitored. Issued by Scottish Widows Investment Management Limited. Regulated by the Financial Services Authority and FSA. *Applies to new lump sums and transfers effected by 31 December 1998.

Fools go the distance

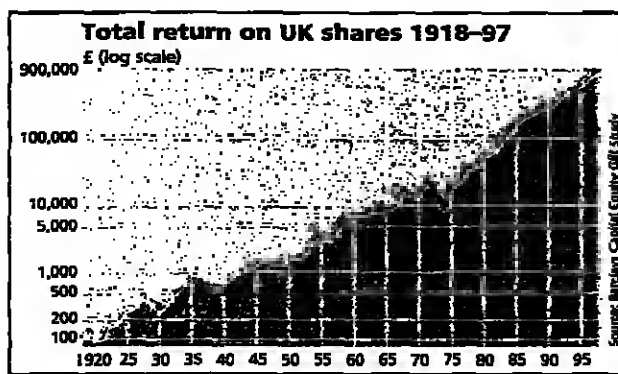
Our third extract from *Motley Fool*, the best-selling investment book

The 'Motley Fool' started in the US as an investment newsletter and has developed into a \$10m internet and publishing business. The heart of its philosophy is that we can all learn to run our own finances - and get better returns than the experts. Those who follow its advice are Fools. This week: the bible of the long-distance investor.

THE MOST thrilling read in Britain is not to be found in any bookshop. The Barclays Capital Equity-Gilt Study is not a snip at £100 but the information it contains is priceless.

Published every year since 1956, this study looks at the returns of British shares against gilts and cash since 1918. Look at the graph, which shows the total return of shares on the London Stock Exchange between 1918 and 1997.

The Equity-Gilt Study tells us that shares have, on average, returned 12.2 per cent a year since 1918, and that is including the Great Crash of 1929. Gilts, which you will remember are government bonds, have returned 6.1 per cent a year over the same period, and cash in a deposit account just 5.4 per cent



Return on £100 invested			
	Dec 1918	Dec 1997	Dec 1997 Real terms*
Cash	£100	£6,521	£324
Gilts	£100	£10,652	£528
Equities	£100	£884,714	£43,891

*Taking into account the effect of inflation. Source: Barclays Capital

annually. From 1945 to 1994, property returned 8.5 per cent a year. At the same time, inflation has been 4.1 per cent on average from 1919-97 and 6.2 per cent from 1946-97. All roads lead back to compound interest. If we had had a solvent ancestor with sufficient fore-

sight and compassion to invest for his grandchildren back in 1918, and he had decided to invest £100 in the various options, how would he have fared? As you can see in the figures on the left, there is no competition. Misguided people say you should not put your money

into shares. Long term, we have seen that isn't so. But what about the short term?

Taking all four-year periods since 1918 (1918-22 etc) equities (shares) have outperformed cash in 82 per cent of them. For gilts, the number is 84 per cent. For consecutive 10-year periods, the numbers rise to 97 per cent and 96 per cent.

Having said that, there's danger aplenty in the stock market if you are going to approach it in a reckless and impulsive manner. Look again at the stock market graph. There are groups of several years where it drops. Those who sell out during this time, losing large amounts and swearing off the market forever, in most cases deserve what they get. Anyone who invests in the market with an ultra-short time horizon - less than five years - is spinning a roulette wheel.

Can shares keep rising?

How far can shares go? Over the long term, the market reflects the growth of business. So, will business always grow? Could there ever be a prolonged period - as long as a human lifetime - in which busi-

ness and thus the stock market fails to grow, or even shrinks? Well, what sustains business? A large number of factors, primarily things like population growth, environmental conditions and government stability. Increasingly, advances in science and technology are also fuelling growth. Do you at present perceive conditions which would lead to stagnation or decline?

It is easy to create scenarios in which that would happen, but most of them involve events such as nuclear war or an asteroid impact. In each of these situations, the performance of your investment portfolio would be the least of your worries.

Our own best guess is that as long as civilisation is around, you will continue to see long-term growth in business and in the world's stock markets.

•Next week: Be your own financial adviser.

•Extracted from the 'Motley Fool Investment Guide' by David Berger with David and Tom Gardner, published by Bantam at £12.99. © David Berger, David and Tom Gardner 1998. For a copy call 0181-324 5522.



Even allowing for the great crash of 1929, shares are the best long-term investment

OTHER FOOLISH INVESTMENTS

•National Savings Certificates You can put between £100 and £10,000 into NS Index-Linked Certificates. They are currently growing at the rate of inflation plus 2 per cent and are tax-free. They can be useful for any old Fool who needs a pot of medium-term cash. For details call 0645 645000. Alternatively, stop by the website at www.open.gov.uk/nsaisa.

•Corporate bonds

If you buy shares in a company then you become a part owner. If one day the company goes bust then you as part owner will be one of the last people to see any money back. Everybody

the company owes money to will be paid off first. Being the owner of a corporate bond, on the other hand, puts you in a different relationship. What you have done is lend the company a sum of money. It agrees to pay you that money back at a specified date in the future, plus a yearly rate of interest, say 8 per cent. Bonds have different safety ratings but mostly they are pretty safe.

Nothing comes for free and you have to pay for this almost absolute assurance of safety with far lower long-term returns on bonds than on shares. That said, corporate bonds are another Foolish store for medium-term money.

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Insert in Scottish Widows Fund and Life Assurance Society, a mutual company, regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Scottish Widows' Return on 1 July 1998 on a regular saving amount of £50 a month from July 1988 to June 1998 inclusive. Return is a return of 24.1% for the 10 year cash option value of a similar plan to the Premier Savings Plan. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. With-profits, bonuses and dividends are not guaranteed in advance. The information given here is based on Scottish Widows' understanding of current tax law and Inland Revenue practice - these may change in future.

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Don't be stuck with a hi-tech lame duck

BY STEPHEN PRITCHARD

RENTING electrical goods, from televisions to washing machines, used to be a popular way to spread the cost of setting up a home. But as prices have fallen, it's cheaper to use a credit card or interest-free loan to buy the goods outright. There is no reason why a television bought 10 years ago will not still be going strong.

But developments in electronics mean that that certainty is under threat. Two new technologies coming out of the market offer extra facilities, but bring an element of risk. After all, no one wants to own the Betamax of the Nineties.

The new gadgets are digital television and DVD. Digital television launched last month on Sky; later this month, OnDigital will launch a system that delivers extra channels without a satellite dish. A third system,



digital cable television, will be available in some parts of the country next year.

None of the digital television systems are compatible with each other, and they all need a separate decoder or set-top box to work. In the next few months, electronics manufacturers will launch integrated digital that do away with the need for a decoder, but they will be expensive.

DVD players are on the market, but prices have only just started to fall. DVD gives a better picture than videotape, and CD-quality sound, but it is a play-only system. It will be some years before recordable DVDs go on sale in the UK.

THE KNOWLEDGE: ELECTRICAL GOODS

•Make sure rental contracts allow for upgrades and check if there is a minimum period before you can make the switch. Some companies now offer downgrades, such as cancelling satellite television.

•Calculate the cost of buying outright and set that against the total rental payments for the time you expect to keep the equipment. Shop around for the best buying prices.

•Check if the deal includes repairs and how quickly they will be carried out.

•Check if the company will move the appliance for you if you move house.

•Remember that rental does not cover insurance, so check your contents policy before the equipment arrives.

some rental companies use list prices and you can get a much better deal in shops.

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THE Prudential's phone and internet bank, egg, has been a victim of its own success: would-be savers may have to wait up to 28 days for their account, writes Stephen Fritchard.

Egg sees the net as fundamental to its development. The established banks, building societies and lenders have to create net sites to work with their existing products. Egg believes it can offer better value by designing products specifically for sale over the phone or via the net.

The egg team hopes to have a current account and stock market investment scheme ready soon. We may

Net's egg is ready to hatch



debt publishers, Moneyfacts. The account application forms are online, although now you still have to use the post to open an account. There is even

a special section explaining the reasons for egg's problems and what the company is doing to resolve them.

A good website has to offer more than just brochures and application forms, and egg has taken steps in the right direction. According to Peter Marsden, egg's IT director, the company wants to create an on-line community of egg customers.

The site also provides financial

news and features, supplied by Moneyworld, an independent web publisher. The choice of articles is not always obvious, and some appear dated although the news section, covering stories such as interest rates and house prices, is useful.

Some of the best information on egg's site comes in the form of its guides. Topics include buying a home, planning for school and university fees.

Perhaps the biggest drawback for net users is that you need Adobe Acrobat Reader, a non-standard piece of software, to access the guides.

*egg: www.egg.com

BEST BORROWING RATES

Telephone	APR %	Term	Interest	Notes
MORTGAGES				
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
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First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest

Telephone	APR %	Term	Interest	Notes
PERSONAL LOANS				
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
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First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest

Telephone	APR %	Term	Interest	Notes
OVERDRAFTS				
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
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First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest

Telephone	APR %	Term	Interest	Notes
CREDIT CARDS				
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
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First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest

Telephone	APR %	Term	Interest	Notes
STORE CARDS				
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
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Telephone	APR %	Term	Interest	Notes
STORE CARDS				
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
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First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest
First Direct	6.000	5 years	5.125	1% of advance interest

APR - Annualised percentage rate. 1% - 1% of advance interest. N - introductory rate for a limited period. All rates subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS, 01244 361100. November 1998.

BEST SAVINGS RATES

Telephone	Account	Notice or Term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest Interval
INSTANT ACCESS					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
TELEPHONE OPERATED AND POSTAL ACCOUNTS					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
NOTICE ACCOUNTS AND BONDS					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
CHEQUE ACCOUNTS					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
FIXED-RATE BONDS					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
FIRST TESSAS					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
FOLLOW-ON TESSAS					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (NET)					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (GROSS)					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (GROSS)					
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£100	6.50%	Year
First Direct	0800 222222	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year

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Legal & General	0.50%	59.99%	

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The Observer, 09.08.98*

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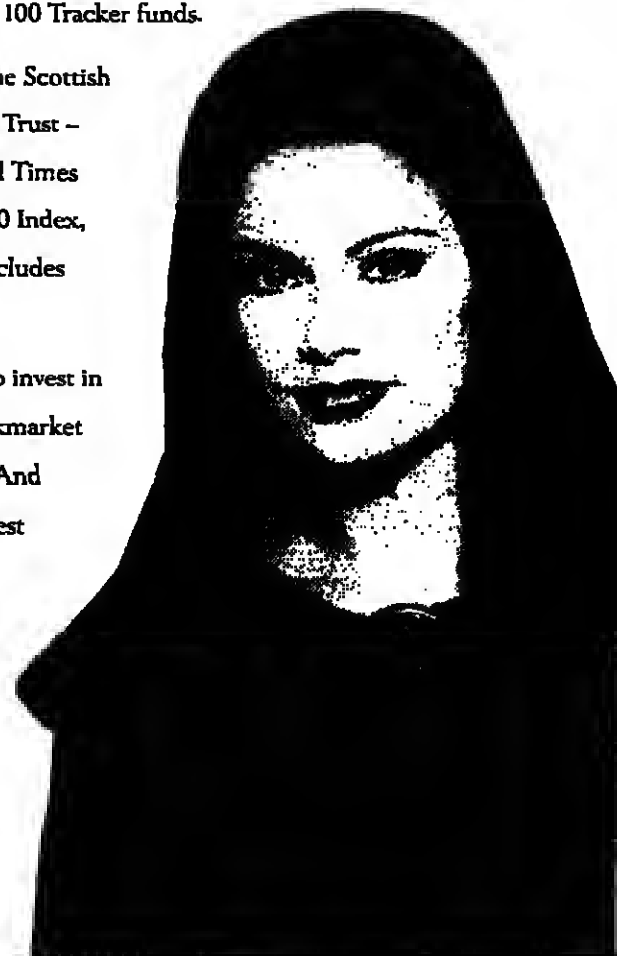
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PERSONAL FINANCE

Betrayed by a gene

Would you want insurance companies to know the results of a genetic test? asks Allison Carvalho

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GENETICS. The word evokes images of a freakish new world inhabited by cloned sheep and square tomatoes, where only the fittest survive. The idea that insurers might use genetic profiles to assess their customers' level of risk has contributed to this impression. But insurers routinely ask questions about medical and family history, so why are genetic test results such a controversial matter?

"The insurance industry has had a pretty bad press," says Peter Maynard, research manager at Swiss Re Life & Health. "The focus has been negative - the belief that genetic tests are a threat to the public, that privacy is being invaded, that selection is being tightened up, and that insurance will be more difficult to get."

GENETICS AND INSURANCE

Last week health minister Tessa Jowell ruled out a total ban on insurers using genetic test information but announced new safeguards on genetic testing. The measures are expected to be in place early next year.

• All types of genetic testing will be evaluated through an independent system before insurers can make use of any results

• The Government's genetics advisory committee will monitor for any evidence that insurance worries are keeping people from taking a genetic test

• There will be a better appeals procedure for people who believe their genetic information has been used inappropriately

• The Government will ensure that unfair discrimination by insurers does not occur

Much of that had press stemmed from the way insurers hungled the disclosure of HIV test results in the 1980s. Now the Government has stepped in to make sure insurers do not abuse genetic data (see box). The new rules will give teeth to the Association of British Insurers (ABI) Code of Practice. The code states genetic test results will only affect premiums if they show a clearly increased risk of illness or death. The code forbids insurers from asking consumers to take genetic tests, and written reasons for any premium increase or application rejection must be provided on request.

So far, genetic tests are only relevant to eight conditions. These include Huntington's

chorea - a neurological condition - Alzheimer's and certain types of hereditary breast cancer. Only people with a strong family history have tests for these disorders, which are usually carried out on the NHS and accompanied by counselling.

None of these tests will be available to insurers until the new independent assessment system has checked their validity. These checks assess whether there is an aberrant gene and whether that gene will cause problems in the future. But they only show the risk of developing an inherited disease.

Earlier this year, Swiss Re conducted focus group research to learn more about the public's views on genetic testing. Around 70 per cent of respondents believed tests to tell if someone

is going to develop a disease are a good idea, while a surprising 41 per cent were willing to have a genetic test. Unsurprisingly, most believed they should not have to share the results with anyone. The 36 per cent who thought the results should be made public were asked with whom they would be willing to share information. Insurance companies came fourth behind GPs, children and partners - but ahead of employers, other family members and friends.

Naturally, the insurance industry wants to protect itself from people who know they are likely to develop a disease but do not say so and buy cover. This increases the potential for big claims and, underwriters argue, higher premiums.



Meanwhile, scientists are working on the human genome project, which aims to identify all 80,000 genes in human DNA. They are expected to reach this goal within the next decade. But once the project is complete, there could be serious social consequences if large numbers of people find cover

unaffordable at a time when state provision for healthcare is shrinking. This scenario could lead to an uninsurable genetic and socio-economic underclass.

Some feel the way round this may be to move away from "risk-based" insurance towards an inclusive social fund.

social policy in the longer term," says Veronica English, genetics project manager at the British Medical Association. "There are no easy answers, but we need to look at both sides of the argument."

• Allison Carvalho is assistant editor of Insurance Age.

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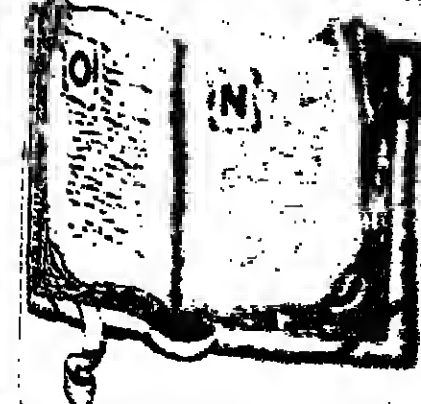
Source: Moneyfacts, comparison correct as at 22 October 1998.

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Common sense in a crazy world

OLD OR NEW TESTAMENT?



...ment is a well written
statement of beliefs

Which Universities
provide the ideal
Conference and
Training Venues

...choice of meeting rooms
...choice of catering
...choice of accommodation
...choice of transport
...choice of entertainment
...choice of refreshments
...choice of facilities
...choice of services
...choice of staff
...choice of equipment
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BUAC

...choice of meeting rooms
...choice of catering
...choice of accommodation
...choice of transport
...choice of entertainment
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...choice of meeting rooms
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...choice of supplies

Telephone codes are changing to accommodate the huge increase in demand for telecoms numbers

A ringing change for business

In the run-up to the year 2000 it is not only the Millennium Bug which calls for a giant number-crunching exercise. Mushooming demand for mobiles, modems, pagers and faxes has prompted a huge rise in demand for telecommunications services. With that has come a need for the whole system of numbering to be rationalised.

Unlike the Millennium Bug, the problem has been carefully anticipated and the costs to business should be comparatively small provided businesses plan ahead. OfTel has addressed the problem by developing a new numbering system.

In 1995 all national area codes were brought together beginning with the 01 prefix. However, other types of telephone services use a mix of different codes and are difficult to understand. So the new numbering system will make it simpler for callers to distinguish exactly which type of number they are dialling by giving types of services a unique prefix.

The next priority is to raise awareness of the changes, how they will work, and how to prepare for them. OfTel identified the need for more numbers and all the phone companies have joined together to implement and communicate the changes via a campaign called "The Big Number".

The changes will be the biggest and most important for the telephone numbering system ever undertaken. The justification for such a wholesale change lies in the need to prepare for the communications of the 21st century.

The new codes will allow both business and residential customers to know in a moment exactly what kind of number they are calling. As the codes become more familiar, it will be immediately obvious what type of call is being made simply by looking at the first two digits of the number. That will allow businesses to keep track of communication costs more easily and make accounting for those costs more straightforward.

For example, mobiles will always carry the same prefix so it will be simpler to keep track of charges for mobile telephone calls. Calls to premium rate services will also be easier to control.



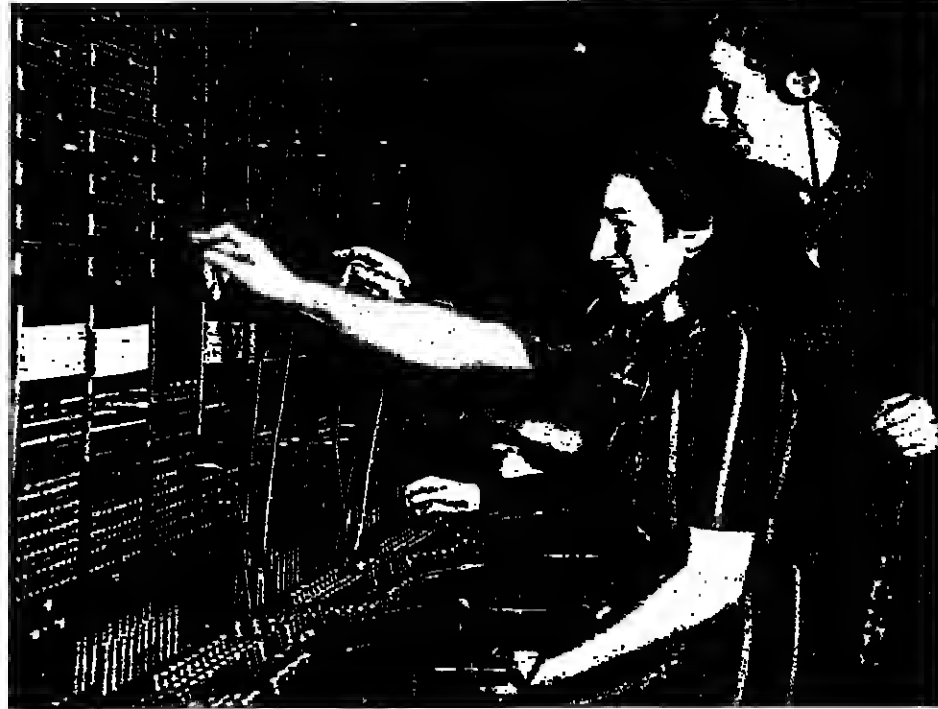
Due to the mushrooming demand for mobiles, modems, pagers and faxes there has been a huge rise in the demand for telecommunications services and as a consequence our numbering system needs to change

The changes will also benefit the burgeoning number of businesses who do most of their business over the phone. As more and more businesses

seek to attract new customers over the phone, customer recognition of freephone numbers such as 0800 needs to be immediate.

Customers will know that any number beginning 08 is free or at a special rate. Already, an additional freephone code, 0808, has been introduced.

By assigning a new code, 09, for premium rate services, the potential for confusion between special rates and premium rates will be eliminated.



New family of codes

00 International Codes - you will still need to dial 00 to telephone abroad. International ISDN access will change from "000" to "00" from 22 April 2000.

01, 02 All area codes will begin 01 or 02. The new 02 codes will be introduced in Cardiff, Coventry, London, Northern Ireland, Portsmouth and Southampton from 22 April 2000. With the ability to use the new area code with the new local number from 1 June 1999.

03, 04, 05, 06 The code ranges 03, 04, 05 and 06 are set aside for future use.

The new family of codes provides a vast bank of numbers and makes the whole system simpler

07 'Find Me Anywhere' numbers - Mobiles, pagers and personal numbers - will all begin with 07.

08 Freephone and Special Rate Services - where you can call free or pay at the local or national rate - will all begin 08. The code 0800 already exists as a free-phone code and we are also now starting to see 0845 for

calls at up to local rate and 0870 for calls up to national rate. There is also now a new freephone code, 0808.

09 Premium Rate Services such as information and entertainment lines will all begin with 09.

For example new mobile numbers begin with 07 and new Premium Rate Services begin with 09

HOW NUMBERS IN '02' ARE AS WILL CHANGE

	Existing	New
London (020)	0171 xxx xxxx	(020) 7xxx xxxx
Portsmouth (023)	0181 xxx xxxx	(020) 8xxx xxxx
Southampton (023)	01705 xxxxxxx	(023) 92xx xxxx
Coventry (024)	01703 xxxxxx	(023) 80xx xxxx
Cardiff (029)	01203 xxxxxx	(024) 76xx xxxx
N. Ireland (028)	01222 xxxxxx	(029) 20xx xxxx
	028 will be the code for all Northern Ireland eg Belfast 01232 xxxxxx	(028) 90xx xxxx

Plans and preparations for the new numbers

With careful planning, the changes should open up opportunities for businesses: to refresh contacts that have gone cold, to renew corporate identities, to speed the way to more efficient communications. But planning must start now.

To get to grips with the practical implications of the new system, businesses need to address five key questions:

1. Businesses outside the new 02 areas will not have to change their fixed line numbers. But mobile, pager and personal numbers will change. Where staff rely on these 'Find me anywhere' numbers to do their jobs, have they informed their business contacts? Even if your number is not changing you may have suppliers or customers who may be affected.

2. Businesses which use freephone, special rate or premium rate numbers will be closely affected by the changes. Has the issue been discussed with the telecoms provider who arranges these services for the business?

3. The changes have implications for stationery, advertising and promotional materials. Consider

what can be done to minimise the cost of wasted stationery. Is a plan in place to adapt advertising formats and promotional literature?

4. Businesses which run systems with pre-programmed telephone numbers - such as switchboards, modems and alarms - may need to adapt their systems. Has the supplier been contacted to discuss the implications?

5. Records will need updating. The changes will affect both electronic and paper-based data systems such as databases and telephone books. Within the company, parallel running can smooth the transition. Have employees been informed of the implications for their own personal records?

The following is a checklist of elements of any business which may need attention:

Materials & Publicity
Stationery
Advertising
Promotional Material
Signage & Livery
Website
Helpline and emergency numbers on packaging/machinery

Systems & Equipment
Switchboard/PBX/Least Cost Routing
Call forwarding/barring
Call loggers
Alarms/security
Teleconferencing
ISDN (including CLI and international)
Modem (e-mail/internet/laptops)
Telephones/mobiles/pagers/fax machines
Private payphones
Records & Databases
Address/phone books (computers/laptops/mobiles)
Databases: staff, customers, suppliers.

Businesses within the 02 areas will need to ensure that people outside those areas - both business contacts and customers - are aware of the new numbers. Surveys have indicated that more than 70 per cent of businesses within the 02 areas know the changes are coming. But those outside the areas need to be alerted.

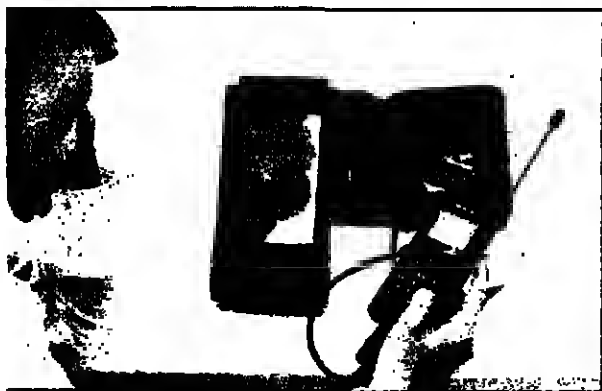
In similar surveys, only just over half of consumers were aware the changes were afoot. And awareness of the changes to mobile and pager numbers is very low - only 17 per cent were aware of the issue even after being prompted.

The low levels of awareness present an opportunity as well as a challenge for business. By getting to grips with the issue and alerting both business associates and customers, new contacts can be made and old contacts refreshed.

A vital part of planning will be to put someone in charge of implementing the changes, giving them the time, authority and resources needed to do the job properly.

A key part of the job will be to conduct an audit of all the elements listed in the checklist above. The person in charge may want to set out key dates as milestones for the planning process, taking into account the most important dates in the company calendar such as AGMs, annual reports, office relocations, new product and service launches and vehicle and signage refurbishment schedules. Once planning is over and implementation has begun, procedures to monitor progress should be put in place.

Businesses within the 02 areas will need to set the dates taking into account the transition period. Consider how to phase in the new numbers from June 1999, when new and old codes and numbers will run in parallel.



Changes for mobile business people

Under the new system, 'Find me anywhere' numbers will be clarified by grouping all mobile, pager and personal numbers to one prefix '07'.

After a transition period, all mobile numbers will begin either 077, 078 or 079. Pager numbers will begin with 076 and personal numbers will remain as 70.

Mobiles and pagers which already begin with 07 will not change, but all other mobile and pager numbers will switch to the new codes. Again, the changes will be made easier by means of long transition period. Between September 1999 and Spring

2001, callers can use either the old or the new number.

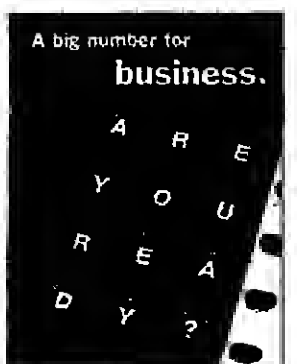
The code changes will also affect callers from abroad, so businesses within the 02 area will need to alert international customers and suppliers of the new numbers. All business with international contacts will also need to inform them of changes to mobile and pager numbers. People calling abroad from the UK will continue to dial 00 for international.

From 22 April 2000, 00 will also become the new international access code for ISDN. The current 000 code will not work after 30 September 2000.



Mobile phones were once a luxury item

How businesses are affected



The most immediate impact of the changes will be upon businesses in London, Northern Ireland, Cardiff, Southampton, Portsmouth and Coventry, where new area codes will be introduced from next June.

All area codes currently start with the '01' prefix. Most of these will stay as they are. But in the areas listed above, the new area codes will all consist of a three digit

number starting with '02'. London numbers, for example, will all begin with 020. Coventry numbers with 024. In the 02 areas, the last part of the local number will remain the same. But there will be an additional one or two digits at the beginning of the local number to make it eight digits long.

The new 02 area codes can be used with new local numbers from 1 June 1999. To ease

transition, business will continue to be able to use the existing area code with the existing local number, for a year.

The changes are slightly different for calls made within a local area - such as calls within London. Before the change-over day you will need to use the existing local number when dialling locally. From 22 April 2000 only the new local number will work.

Website shows the way

Telephone companies are as keen as any business to ensure the transition to the new numbering system runs smoothly. Working together, they are laying on facilities to make it easier for businesses to adapt. Key information is contained on a website which

supports 'The Big Number' campaign, which contains all the information a business may need about the campaign. It can be found at:

www.numberchange.org
A helpline is also available

on the new freephone code, 0808:

0808 22 4 2000

For further information, call the helpline, access the website or speak to your telecoms provider.

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LONDON MARKET

Outlook gloomy despite cut

By Lori Brumat and
Perri Colley McKinney

UK STOCKS are likely to fall, with British Airways, British Energy and PowerGen posting lacklustre earnings. Concern that slowing world economies will damp corporate profits won't be assuaged by last week's interest rate cut. "We're not out of the woods yet," said Tristan George, equities manager at Carr Sheppard. "It's going to take strong sentiment in the face of the continuing disappointing earnings results."

Gills are expected to be little changed, with investors unwilling to place big bets before the Bank of England publishes its quarterly inflation report on Wednesday, which is expected to boost hopes of lower interest rates.

There's little incentive for most people to get involved in the market either way," said Tim Harris, a market strategist at National Australia Bank. Still, the inflation report is likely to highlight the case for lower rates soon.

In addition, a report on producer price inflation and a survey of retail sales in October are also likely to bolster expectations that interest rates will fall further.

On Friday, the yield on the benchmark gilt rose 10 basis points to 5.12 per cent. The Bank of England's attempt to ward off

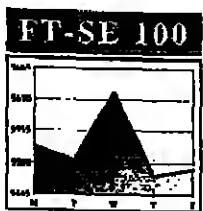
recession will help stocks more than bonds, according to John McNeill, a market strategist at Sutherlands Stockbrokers. Monetary policy "will be set to sustain growth, and equities should outperform bonds" in that environment, he said.

The FT-SE 100 index last week rose 1 per cent to 5,491.0 making a gain of 18 per cent since 5 October, after plunging 25 per cent in the 10 weeks before then. Banks were the biggest gainers last week, with the FT-SE banking index up 3.36 per cent.

Investors don't expect banks' advance to continue. "The rate cut sends out mixed messages," said Mr George. "Either it says the Bank wants to send a good message to manufacturers suffering from the strong pound, or it says the economy is slowing more than we thought."

Financial service companies were boosted on Friday by speculation that Halifax and the Prudential could merge to create Britain's third largest financial company with a market capitalisation of some £37bn.

"There have been so many of these rumours in the past - I wouldn't put too much into it," said Simon Smith, equities manager at Capel Cure Sharp.



NEW YORK MARKET

Hopes for rate cut wane

By Beth Williams

OPTIMISM for an imminent interest rate cut is waning after Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan suggested that the paralysis that gripped financial markets since August has begun to relax.

Yet some of the biggest bond investors say conditions in the credit markets are far from normal, and that they still expect the Fed to cut rates for a third time in less than two months, when policy makers meet on 17 November.

"A quarter of a point is a small price to pay for insurance, from there on, they'll have to reassess the situation," said William Gross, bond manager at Pacific Investment Management. "What's the risk of not doing it? Setting off another round of contagion."

When Mr Greenspan ordered the 15 October rate cut - the first change between meetings in more than four years - a central bank statement said it was intended to curb the "growing caution by lenders and unsettled conditions in financial markets".

Since the last cut, Fed officials have said publicly that they're keeping a close watch on US credit market conditions to make sure they settle down. While

there's been improvement, anomalies still exist.

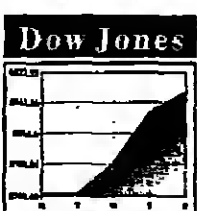
"Conditions have not come back to what one would describe as normal," said Jonathan Francis, head of global strategy at Putnam Investments. Corporate bond sales, which ground to a halt between early August and mid-October, have picked up again. Yet

traders say it's still tough to trade all but bonds of the biggest companies because securities firms, stung from recent trading losses, are reluctant to make markets in many bonds.

While the Fed might not follow up a November cut with further moves this year, Mr Gross predicts the Fed will eventually cut rates in 4 per cent as the economy slows.

Others argue it would be hard for Fed officials to make a case for easing based on the economy. The Fed's own forecasts show growth slowing to 2 per cent to 2.5 per cent next year - a level long considered the fastest rate the economy can grow without raising the danger of accelerating inflation.

At the same time, some analysts now say the worst may be over. A 13 per cent gain in the Dow Jones index since 13 October may pave the way for a pick-up in consumer confidence after it dropped to its lowest level in almost two years.



TOKYO MARKET

Disappointment in the air

By Jackie Kestenbaum and
Tom Kariya

JAPANESE stocks may fall this week, paced by banks, and bonds are likely to rise on expectations that a government economic stimulus package to be released mid-month will disappoint.

The government is set to unveil its next set of measures aimed at re-booting Japan's frozen economy on 16 November. Yet officials have already dashed hopes by postponing deliberations on individual, corporate and residential tax cuts until January.

"The market has no patience for the government's lethargic approach," said Tomotomoe Soga, director at Nikko International. "If the package is only about money but lacks vision, the market will give it a resounding no."

Last week, the yield on the benchmark government bond rose 15 basis points to 0.835 per cent. The government's foot dragging on tax cuts "will cause bonds to test their upper limits," said Xinyi Lu, chief strategist at Paribas Capital Market.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 stock average rose 4.1 per cent last week to 14,121.97. The gains are likely to be "one-off," said Kevin Heber, strategist at Warburg, Dillon Read, who sees the market

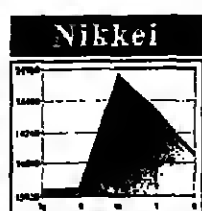
trading between 13,500 and 14,250 this week. "Positive catalysts to encourage buying are unlikely to come from either the next supplementary budget or interim results season," said Mr Heber.

Investors will be watching the half-year earnings from companies including Honda Motor, Shiseido, Olympus Optical and the JR railways.

"Most of the [earnings] to be disclosed will be worse than expected," said Kiyoshi Sugawara, chairman of Lehman Brothers Japan. "That's the basic tone." Still, continued strength in the US economy may cushion losses in Tokyo, helping exporters.

Sumitomo Bank and Mitsui Fudosan led Friday's retreat as investors worried that a delay in measures to rouse the country's dormant property market will increase banks' bad-debt burden and weigh down developers' profits.

Mitsui Fudosan, the country's biggest developer also said it changed its group profit forecast of ¥10bn for the year to March to a ¥16.5bn loss. "Almost all these shares have been bid up in the face of terrible earnings prospects solely on expectations that the government will get its act together," said Yusuke Mitsuhashi, a manager at NCG Investment Trust. "When those expectations slump, the shares are bound to follow."



BRITAIN'S BIGGEST

Name	Index Weight	Last Trade	Chg Pct 3m	Chg Pct Ytd
FTSE 100 INDEX	100.00	5491.00	-1.84	6.92
ASSOCIATED BRITISH FOODS PLC	0.52	570.000	4.59	8.57
ALLIANCE & LEICESTER PLC	1.14	724.000	---	---
ALLIANCE & LEICESTER PLC	0.52	889.000	4.71	11.13
ALLIANCE DOMESTIC PLC	0.55	526.500	-5.22	0.48
ARBEY NATIONAL PLC	1.65	1158.000	2.48	6.14
ASDA GROUP PLC	0.50	163.500	-13.95	-7.89
AMVESCAP PLC	0.30	456.000	-23.10	-12.81
BRITISH AEROSPACE PLC	0.80	463.500	2.14	4.55
BAA PLC	0.69	600.000	-3.14	30.12
BARCLAYS PLC	1.87	1232.000	-25.29	-23.67
BASS PLC	0.60	740.000	-25.57	-21.34
BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO PLC	0.77	490.000	---	---
BRITISH AIRWAYS PLC	0.43	28.000	-28.89	-27.68
BSG PLC	0.30	330.000	7.18	47.08
BRITISH ENERGY PLC	0.40	554.000	-4.48	30.97
BRITISH LAMCO COMPANY PLC	0.27	522.000	2.35	-23.35
BILLITON PLC	0.31	145.750	8.36	-6.57
BOC GROUP PLC	0.23	500.000	15.46	-13.09
BOOTS COMPANY PLC	0.80	300.000	-7.14	9.76
BRITISH PETROLEUM CO PLC	5.40	910.000	18.42	14.13
BANK OF SCOTLAND	0.77	60.000	-3.95	10.71
BRITISH SKY BROADCASTING PLC	0.82	400.000	12.03	4.17
BRITISH TELECOM PLC	5.22	700.000	0.56	68.13
BTR PLC	0.20	300.000	-30.19	-38.88
CADBURY SCHWEPPE'S PLC	0.52	303.000	7.25	47.19
CARLTON COMMUNICATIONS PLC	0.28	448.000	-8.76	-4.68
CGU PLC	1.21	920.000	-22.69	8.36
CENTRICA PLC	0.50	112.000	19.15	25.14
COMPASS GROUP PLC	0.43	628.000	16.73	67.69
COLT TELECOM GROUP PLC	0.43	720.000	11.09	367.15
CABLE & WIRELESS PLC	0.25	640.000	-12.81	19.63
DIAGEO PLC	0.25	500.000	-11.56	10.05
EMI GROUP PLC	0.29	365.250	-24.17	-28.49
GRANADA GROUP PLC	0.80	876.000	-8.85	-5.81
GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC	0.26	292.000	-11.52	-10.36
GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY PLC	1.23	456.000	-3.39	15.59
GKN PLC	0.62	732.000	-6.03	17.40
GLAXO WELLCOME PLC	6.66	1833.000	1.22	27.29
GREAT UNIVERSAL STORES PLC	0.68	650.000	-5.73	-15.25
HAYS PLC	0.41	955.000	10.41	17.61
HALIFAX PLC	2.05	845.000	18.68	10.60
HSBC HOLDINGS PLC	1.32	1413.000	6.32	-5.93
HSBC HOLDINGS PLC (75P)	1.32	1482.000	5.48	-5.00
IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INOS PLC	0.43	590.000	-19.18	-37.96
3I GROUP PLC	0.31	520.000	-2.78	3.96
KINGFISHER PLC	0.24	530.000	16.42	27.12
LABROCK GROUP PLC	0.20	200.000	-13.55	-10.61
LAMOND SECURITIES PLC	0.42	855.000	4.52	-11.86
LEGAL & GENERAL GROUP PLC	0.89	693.000	-1.00	30.26
LYONS GROUP PLC	0.44	808.000	3.86	2.67
LYONS GROUP PLC	0.30	200.250	-9.46	-3.14
LUCASVARITY PLC	1.78	410.000	-18.73	-31.55
MARKS & SPENCER PLC	0.25	440.000	-17.78	21.31
NYCOMED AMERSHAM PLC	0.26	400.000	7.94	-6.75
NATIONAL GRID GROUP PLC	0.61	412.000	-4.41	43.35
NATIONAL POWER PLC	0.67	530.000	5.82	-10.58
NORWICH UNION PLC	0.81	415.000	-4.12	7.44
NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK	1.68	805.000	-16.17	-2.67
ORANGE PLC	0.34	715.000	-14.23	132.95
PENINSULAR & ORIENT STEAM NAV	0.80	624.500	33.07	-9.82
PRUDENTIAL CORPORATION PLC	1.32	829.000	1.30	12.94
PEARSON PLC	0.56	1038.000	-4.77	31.23
POWERGEN PLC	0.55	835.000	-9.44	5.00
ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND GROUP	0.78	820.000	-6.03	5.88
RECKITT & COLMAN PLC	0.41	750.000	-14.01	5.08
REED INTERNATIONAL PLC	0.58	500.000	-13.04	-18.03
RIO TINTO PLC - REG	0.81	750.000	11.19	0.80
ROLLS-ROYCE PLC	0.56	320.000	1.50	-0.85
ROYAL & SUN ALLIANCE INS GRP	0.78	500.000	-19.55	-18.27
RAILTRACK GROUP PLC	0.84	1640.000	7.24	69.91
RENTOKIL INITIAL PLC	1.11	500.000	5.88	46.04
REUTERS GROUP PLC	0.85	500.000	1.28	-10.22
SMITHKLINE BEECHAM PLC	4.12	715.000	11.70	17.98
SAINSBURY (U) PLC	1.06	550.000	8.80	8.06
SECURICOR PLC	0.30	399.000	-1.19	74.17
SCOTTISH & NEWCASTLE PLC	0.45	724.000	-12.77	-2.88
SCHROEDERS PLC	0.95	1160.000	-23.18	-9.04
SCHROEDERS PLC-NON VOTING SHR	0.95	964.000	-25.21	-18.44
SIEBE PLC	0.40	200.000	-20.00	-30.04
SOUTHERN ELECTRIC PLC	0.40	200.000	6.88	23.81
SEMA GROUP PLC	0.40	200.000	42.46	42.46
SAFARIWAY PLC	0.33	227.000	2.02	-14.29
STAGECOACH HOLDINGS PLC	0.30	227.000	2.02	35.86
SHELL TRANSPORT & TRADING CO PLC	2.50	350.000	0.99	-20.45
SUN LIFE & PROVINCIAL HLDS	0.42	515.000	-2.65	11.96
SMITH INDUSTRIES PLC	0.26	835.000	16.62	-1.53
SCOTTISH POWER PLC	0.75	622.000	5.42	15.61
STANDARD CHARTERED PLC	0.64	639.000	3.07	-1.69
SEVERN TRENT PLC	0.34	1006.000	-4.67	-0.09
TOMKINS PLC	0.34	290.750	0.57	6.67
TESCO PLC	1.17	176.000	-1.68	22.74
THAMES WATER PLC	0.39	1108.000	-1.68	106.88
TELEWEST COMMUNICATIONS PLC	0.29	136.000	-15.27	16.89
UNILEVER PLC	2.00	609.000	3.22	-8.23
UNITED NEWS & MEDIA PLC	0.32	636.000	-20.50	9.10
UNITED UTILITIES PLC	0.47	851.000	-4.06	89.98
VOAFONE GROUP PLC	2.59	834.000	10.32	18.95
WILLIAMS PLC	0.29	391.750	3.64	26.35
WPP GROUP PLC	0.26	340.500	-5.94	-10.44
WHITBREAD PLC	0.40	798.000	-7.64	14.77
WOOLWICH PLC	0.57	357.500	6.72	14.77
ZENECA GROUP PLC	2.20	2303.000	1.01	7.77

UP

ROYAL Bank of Scotland shares rose 12 per cent last week, helped by takeover talk. One broker is recommending the shares as the cheapest in the sector in terms of its price/earnings ratio and it has the best yield. However, one of the suggested buyers, Marks & Spencer, the UK's biggest mortgage lender, was also buoyant on takeover speculation, rising nearly 7 per cent. On Friday, it was suggested that Prudential, the UK's biggest insurer, is lining up a £300m merger with Halifax to create the UK's third-biggest financial services company.

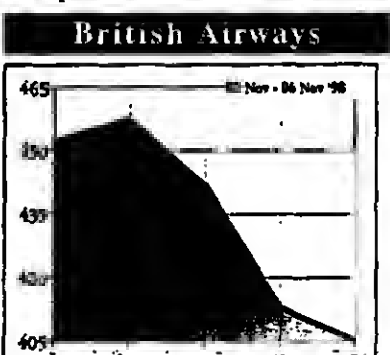
Bank shares are returning to favour as markets stabilise, following talk of consolidation in the industry.



DOWN

BRITISH AIRWAYS shares fell nearly 7 per cent to 405p last week after ABN Amro cut its profit forecast for Europe's largest airline. The carrier said on Wednesday that first and business-class traffic fell 2.4 per cent in October.

Slowing worldwide economic growth has prompted analysts to revise down earnings expectations for several airlines. "At a time when the market is weak [BA] is putting on more capacity," said Declan Magee, ABN Amro's European airline analyst. "The only way to sell tickets is to cut prices." ABN cut its forecast for BA net income by 17 per cent to £445m for the year to March. BA will post second-quarter results tomorrow.



COMPANY OF THE WEEK

MARKS & SPENCER reported its first profit decline in seven years and warned that earnings will deteriorate as waning consumer spending erodes sales at Britain's largest clothing retailer.

Its shares fell 10 per cent, to 404p, on the news. Chairman Sir Richard Greenbury said he doesn't expect an improvement in the second half after a 44 per cent fall in first-half profit to £180.5m from £321.4m.

"What is interesting is the unremittingly gloomy tone not just in the UK but everywhere they are operating," said William Cullum, an analyst at Paribas Capital Markets, who is cutting his full-year earnings forecast by 8 per cent. "We won't see much growth" next year.

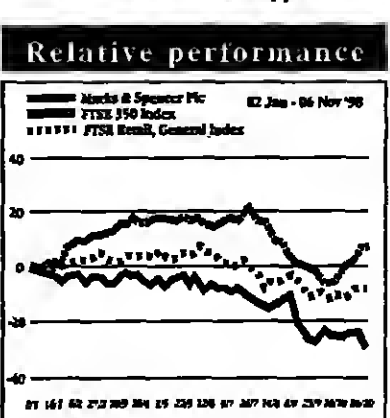
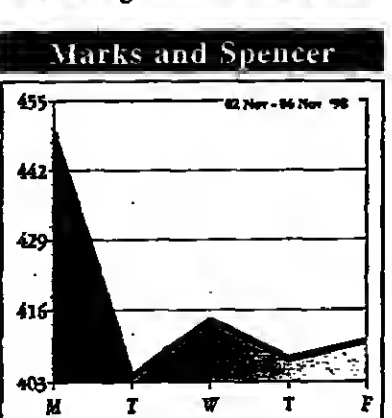
Marks has suffered from an industry-wide slowdown as job cuts and talk of a global recession deterred spending. Like food retailers Tesco, Sainsbury's and Safeway, Marks has moved into financial services to seek growth. That division, where

pre-tax profit rose 19.7 per cent, was the only one to report higher earnings.

Marks' shares have dropped 29 per cent in the past six months, compared with a 16 per cent decline in general retail stocks as investors realise it is not immune to the problems other retailers face.

"We all thought sales would recover in September and October," Sir Richard said. "In fact they've gone further south. It's a blood bath out there on the clothing side." Marks' first-half profit was also eroded by the cost of store acquisitions from Littlewoods, a new till system and a mail-order venture.

Marks has pared £300m from a £2.2bn, three-year investment programme to increase sales space, and will further scale back investment after 2000. The programme will hamper earnings by £90m in the current year, Sir Richard said. The retailer plans to cut costs, cut prices in its stores this year and next and negotiate better terms from its suppliers.



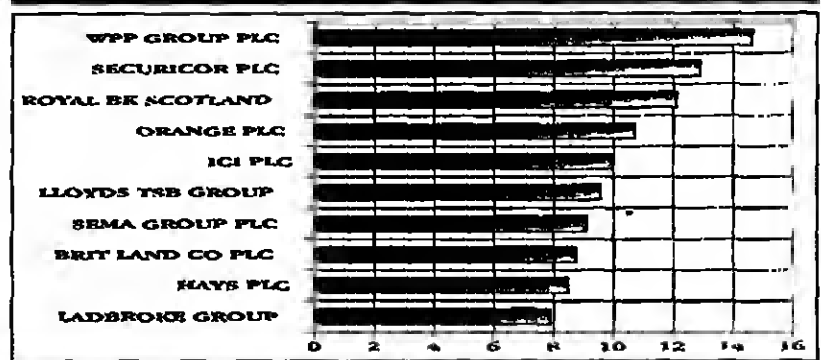
WORLD INDICES

Name	Index	Chg % 1m	Chg % 3m
NORTH/LATIN			
DOW JONES IND.	15,390	4.16	4.16
S&P 500 INDEX	15,370	4.16	4.16
NASDAQ INDEX	22,000	0.75	0.75
TSE 300 INDEX	18,810	-3.93	-3.93
MEXICO BOLSA IND.	24,220	7.16	7.16
BRAZIL BOVESPA IND.	30,010	-14.99	-14.99
EUROPE			
FTSE 100 INDEX	13,120	-1.84	-1.84
CAC 40 INDEX	16,420	-9.57	-9.57
OAX INDEX (MEX)	18,490	-13.00	-13.00
IBEX 35 INDEX	21,640	-9.01	-9.01
MILAN MIB30 IND.	14,720	-12.94	-12.94
SEL20 INDEX	15,590	-6.14	-6.14
AMSTERDAM	20,400	-9.08	-9.08
OMX (STOCKH)	17,450	-12.34	-12.34
SWISS MARKET	20,380	-15.26	-15.26
PACIFIC RIM			
NIKKEI 225 INDEX	8,450	-11.05	-11.05
HANG SENG 5100	34,040	39.78	39.78
FTSE ALL-SHARE	12,970	-3.44	-3.44

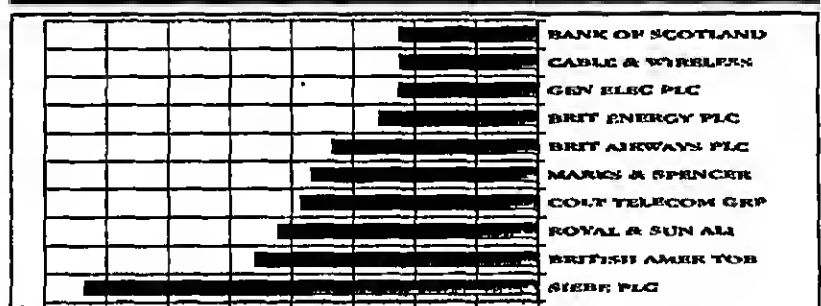
FT-SE 100 INDEX

02 Nov - 06 Nov '98

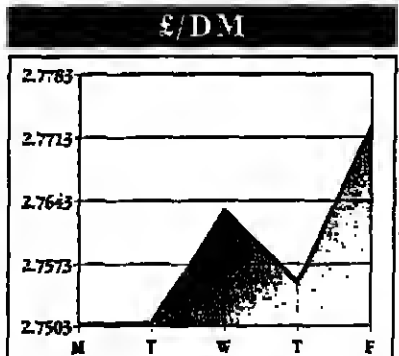
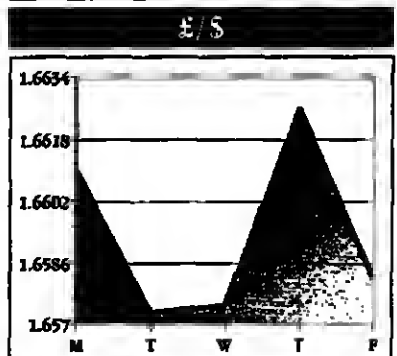
BEST PERFORMING SHARES (%)



WORST PERFORMING SHARES (%)



CURRENCIES



By Perri Colley McKinney

THE British pound is expected to trade little changed this week, steered against further losses after Thursday's bigger than expected interest rate cut brightened the outlook for UK economic growth.

"The Bank of England has bitten the bullet," said Helena Morrissey, fixed-income manager at Newton Investment Management. "It's what the economy needs" and should keep the pound trading above Thursday's low of DM2.7436, she said.

The pound rose on Friday to DM2.7626, erasing the decline to DM2.7436 on Thursday from DM2.7600 before the noon rate announcement. It was unchanged against the dollar at \$1.6625.

While lower rates generally hurt a currency - and, indeed, recently sent the pound to a 16-month low against the dollar - analysts interpreted the Bank of England's relatively aggressive, half-point rate reduction as beneficial for the currency.

"The central bank has shown it's going to do all it can to avoid a recession, and in the longer term, a stronger economy is good news for the pound," said Karl Shah, market strategist at Samwa International.

The Bank of England, trying to avert recession, last week cut rates for the second time in less than a month. It lowered the country's benchmark lending rate to 6.75 per cent from 7.25 per cent, while most economists expected a quarter-point reduction.

Even after the rate cuts, UK rates are higher than those in the US and Germany, giving the pound an attractive money-market return. Three-month sterling deposits yield 7.06 per cent, while dollar deposits bring 5.38 per cent and

mark deposits 3.60 per cent.

Evidence of slowing UK growth is piling up. Last week reports showed that manufacturing output declined 0.4 per cent in September from August. An 18 per cent trade-weighted gain in the pound since August 1996 makes UK goods more expensive overseas. The CBI said retail sales growth slowed to the weakest in three years in the last three months.

<

The dark side of falling interest rates

THE BANK of England's decision to cut interest rates last Thursday serves to remind us that we, the Americans and, in due course, the 11 countries that will be joining the European single currency in the first instance, are embarking on an interest rate-cutting cycle that has a lot further to go. Why, one may ask, should falling interest rates have a dark side and is it even necessary to ask the question?

Well, to appreciate what lies behind this, we need to understand two things. First, the world economy still faces strong deflationary headwinds. It is going to take a long time for the overhang of debt, excess capacity and insolvency to unwind. Falling interest rates soften the blow but don't really solve these problems.

Second, the world economy's current malaise was not caused by high interest rates and tight monetary conditions and it is probably rather naive to jump to the knee-jerk conclusion that falling interest rates will be the cure-all. They are essential to cushion the economic downturn ahead and to help stimulate global aggregate demand over the next couple of years. In economies such as the UK and the US with solvent banking systems and high consumer balance sheet sensitivity to interest rates, falling interest rates will be positive. But it may take longer than usual before Goldilocks comes out from behind the bushes.

The fall in interest rates so far has clearly lifted sentiment in, and flow into, equity and other risk assets and left fixed-income markets struggling. Maybe this benign state of affairs will continue through Christmas and into the new year, maybe it won't. But if financial markets are saying, in effect, that the worst of the global economic crisis is over and discounted and that the power of falling interest rates is going to

work its traditional cyclical magic, I beg to differ.

I think we are seeing a W-shaped pattern of risk asset performance. Quite where we are on the first uptick is hard to say, but after the 15 to 20 per cent recovery in stock prices over the last month, a new note of caution seems warranted.

Here's why: familiar event risks: industrial country economic damage now on its way to a high street near you; and the unfolding of the downswing in the global credit cycle.

There is some better news in the

We are embarking on an interest rate-cutting cycle that has a lot further to go

familiar event risk category, but dark clouds still loom in Asia, Japan, Brazil and China. A deeper issue now for industrial countries is a bit more esoteric and lurks behind all the headlines on retail sales, unemployment and other traditional indicators. In short, it concerns the downswing in the global credit cycle and, in extremis, fears about a full-blown credit crunch—a situation where creditworthy borrowers are shut off from access to credit not because of high interest rates but because of the unwillingness of banks and credit institutions to lend.

Even if these fears are, in the end, overblown, there is sufficient cause to believe that the full impact of the credit cycle downswing has not yet been reflected in real and money GDP forecasts for 1999 and 2000. To this extent, financial markets are most unlikely yet to have discounted

the downside in economic growth, earnings prospects and bond yields.

Credit market conditions are inextricably linked to real economic activity and asset prices. In its surprise interest rate cut on 15 October, the US Federal Open Market Committee stated that: "Growing caution by lenders and unsettled conditions in financial markets more generally are likely to be restraining aggregate demand in the future."

To demonstrate this, my colleague, Andy Cates, has produced some interesting work showing how the credit and output cycles over the last 30 years are broadly similar. This work then introduces the influence of and feedback into asset price movements. Since we are only just starting to see loose evidence of a downturn in credit growth, it is not surprising that the analysis suggests that bond yields in the US and Europe are more or less at fair value.

But with the credit cycle likely to weaken over the coming quarters, the prospect is for bond yields to trend lower, notwithstanding the recent shake-out, which has seen

some investors dump bonds for stocks and credit instruments. This conclusion is supported also by the linkages between credit growth and the so-called output gap, measuring the degree of slack in the economy. The G7 countries as a whole have a small output gap, which is going to get bigger over the coming year, and which will validate lower levels of long-term interest rates before the global economy turns back up.

But with stock markets rising by about 20 per cent over the last month, a more sobering thought arises when we look at how much excess liquidity there is in relation

to stock markets. The accompanying graph shows excess or deficient monetary growth, derived from an equation that relates broad monetary growth to GDP, interest rates and inflation in G7 countries and the deviation from trend in a G7 GDP-weighted equity market index. At the extreme right-hand side of the chart, the very recent turning points in both measures can be seen to have started. Looking forward, our contention is that some compression in monetary growth is likely as reduced economic activity rates, risk aversion and a weaker credit cycle interact and, in turn, take equity market values back to or below fair value.

Evidence of a weaker credit cycle is accumulating. Survey evidence in the US suggests banks are getting more cautious about loan quality and terms. More generally, the margins at which corporate and sovereign credit instruments trade over benchmark government bonds are still quite wide, despite some recent narrowing. The spread that prime Japanese banks pay for three-month interbank funds in dollars relative to prime US banks, aka the Japan pre-

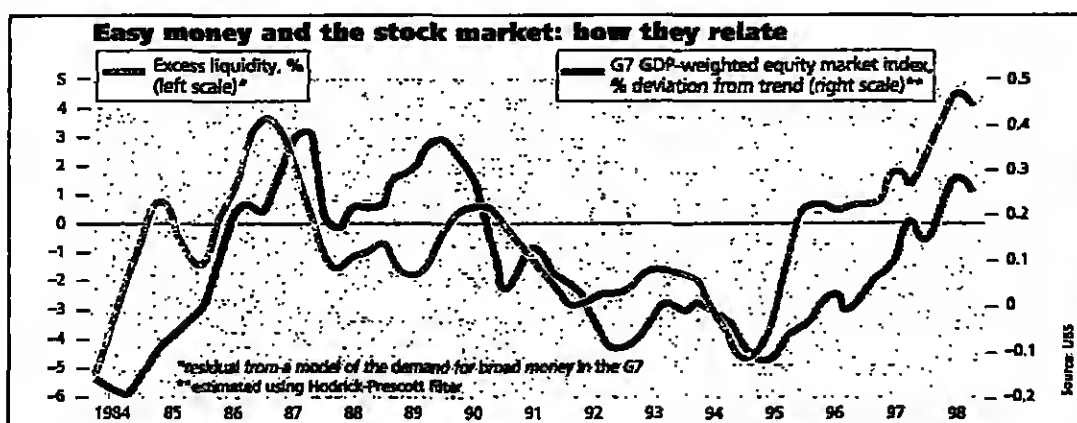
mium, is now around 90 basis points and close to the historic high of last November. Last but not least, the latest CBI survey in the UK showed that the balance of firms reporting an inability to raise external finance as a constraint on investment reached its highest level (apart from one survey in 1993) since the question was asked for the first time in 1979. The evidence is still patchy—as it would be before the downturn in the economic cycle is more visible and more widespread. But the bottom line is that as the downturn

Federal Reserve can avert a credit crunch. The Europeans could too, although it is particularly unclear from the Maastricht Treaty who is supposed to do what in the event of such an outcome under a single currency. These data do not cover trading or capital market exposure, which has clearly suffered this year, nor do they include potential derivatives exposure problems.

But the point here is not to forecast a global credit crunch but rather to highlight the degree of sensitivity to monetary medicine that must first relieve symptoms before it (with other policy initiatives) can cure and restore. The overall conclusion is that interest rates do have to fall but that this is in keeping with the weakening in the credit cycle, brought about by risk aversion and balance sheet contraction, partly related to past experience and partly to the current and forthcoming economic slowdown.

The power of monetary easing is a well-known and observable phenomenon in a world where the business cycle is "normal", but most of us believe things are far from normal. Will falling interest rates work the way that is normally expected? If firms and households are trying to reduce debt, lower interest rates will not encourage them to make greater use of leverage. Since the world is characterised by over-investment, excess capacity and profit shock, lower interest rates won't necessarily encourage companies to step up to the plate and expand capital outlays. In short, the markets may be putting too much faith in the ability and speed of falling interest rates to sustain economic growth and corporate earnings in the quarters ahead.

* George Magnus is chief economist at Warburg, Dillon, Read.



After the recovery in stock prices over the last month, a note of caution seems warranted

gathers momentum, so the evidence will grow stronger.

The recent news that Germany's second largest bank took a \$2.1bn (£1.2bn) write-off on its bad loans has provided more fuel for those concerned that the credit cycle has more "nasties" in store. This write-off was in relation to real estate in eastern Germany. But the emerging market bad loan saga is not yet over. In Europe, Bank for International Settlements data show that banks (in Germany, France, Italy, UK, Spain and the Netherlands) had reported exposure to emerging markets at the end of last year of \$410bn, the equivalent of nearly 6 per cent of GDP and 68 per cent of aggregate capital.

These numbers are far higher than for the US, where exposure amounted to \$104bn, 1.5 per cent of GDP and 11 per cent of banks' capital. With little doubt, the US

Central bankers across Europe are under pressure to toe a line drawn by new political masters, writes Stephen Castle

WHEN European finance ministers met last month, in a drab concrete block in Luxembourg, Theo Waigel, Germany's veteran disciple of sound money, made his swansong appearance after his party's rejection by the German electorate.

But few around the table seemed to grasp the scale of the moment, and Mr Waigel got just one farewell gift—a bottle of Scotch from Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

One month on, the change of regime has become impossible to ignore. Mr Waigel's more flamboyant successor, Oskar Lafontaine, has led Europe's leftward shift in economic thinking, appealing openly for lower interest rates and plunging Germany into a bitter row over the independence of its central bank.

The call for cheaper borrowing has been echoed by a host of European politicians, and augmented by demands for a new, neo-Keynesian spending package to boost job creation. On the eve of the birth of the euro, politicians have begun to challenge the Continent's powerful central bankers. Suddenly the main planks of Europe's single currency, with its strong, independent central bank (the so-called "son of Bundesbank") and its "Stability and Growth Pact" with punishments for nations which run up big deficits, seems to be in question.

In Germany the shift is clear. The Bundesbank has enjoyed hallowed status as the guiding influence behind the country's long-term financial success, based on low inflation and steady growth. Accustomed to independence, it resented any hint of intervention from politicians, but rarely had cause to. Despite occasional tensions, Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic government accepted such a status quo and Mr Waigel never commented on interest rate movements.

Two weeks ago, the new German Defence Secretary, Rudolf Scharping, was the first to call for a "dialogue" with central bankers to convince them to reduce rates. At a summit in Austria, the Italian and Portuguese prime ministers joined in. Newly installed in a more powerful finance ministry, Mr Lafontaine added his voice. Since then, five European countries, including Britain, have cut the cost of borrowing.

In addition there were hints from the European Commission that countries launching big investment projects may be allowed to breach tough limits laid down for the single currency under the Stability and Growth Pact.

But last week marked the beginning of a counter-offensive from central bankers, mindful that Mr Lafontaine's real target is the European Central Bank,



Oscar Lafontaine: the newly installed German Finance Secretary has riled the proudly independent Bundesbank by applying pressure for a cut in interest rates

Leaning on the money men

which will control euro-zone rates from January.

Jean-Claude Trichet, governor of the Bank of France and future vice president of the ECB, argued: "Any suggestion that central banks were on the

On the eve of the birth of the euro, politicians have begun to challenge central bankers

way to losing their independence would affect savers' confidence, both in Europe and worldwide, and as a result rates would have to go up."

On Thursday, German rates remained unchanged at 3.3 per cent, despite an appearance by

Mr Lafontaine at the Bundesbank policy-making committee. Indeed, the Finance Secretary's pressure was probably counter-productive, economically if not politically. Dr Rolf Schneider, head of macro research at Dresdener Bank in Frankfurt, said: "The fact that Mr Lafontaine has asked, in such a situation, means that we cannot expect the Bundesbank to reduce rates."

"We expect the ECB will start with a rate of 3.3 per cent which is still an easing of monetary policy because



Wim Duisenberg, ECB president (left), and Hans Tietmeyer, Bundesbank president



rates throughout the zone average 3.5 per cent and that figure was 3.7 per cent a few weeks ago."

Allies of Wim Duisenberg, the president of the ECB, argue that interest rates in core EU countries are low, and that reducing them would not automatically create jobs (extremely low Japanese rates have not prevented stagnation, they point out). As one source put it: "Lafontaine is on a learning curve. The idea that you just reduce interest rates and create jobs is unre-

alistic. It doesn't work like this."

Whatever Mr Lafontaine thinks of this, Mr Duisenberg is set to enjoy a considerable degree of independence, because his position is pro-

Politicians favour looser policy, bankers want to stick with sound money

tected by international treaty. So why has this row erupted with such ferocity, and what does it mean for the nascent euro? The change of governments in Germany and Italy leave just two of the 15 European capitals in the hands of

conservatives. The leftward shift has coincided with the global economic downturn, producing a series of questions about how the new currency should work.

All this is happening as the euro-11 nations manage the transition of responsibility from their national central banks to the ECB, putting the relationship between bankers and politicians into the spotlight.

Meanwhile Europe is conducting a philosophical debate about how a currency designed to control inflation in mind, should adapt to a situation where the danger is one of recession.

Politicians favour looser policy, bankers want to stick with what they know: sound money. The Maastricht Treaty appears to bolster the position of the bankers, because it states that the ECB's primary responsibility is to maintain price stability.

But latest figures from the European Commission show that inflation in the euro-zone fell from 1.4 per cent in July to 1.2 per cent in August and 1 per cent in September. In other words, the target of price stability has already been achieved. Which prompts the new left consensus to argue that it is time to focus on other, secondary treaty objectives, such as supporting the general economic policies of the EU.

With the current ECB looking less than likely to comply, Europe's politicians face an acute challenge. As one source put it: "The fear, among Europe's politicians, is that if they don't get their act together, the only serious actor on the European stage will be the ECB."

Hence Mr Lafontaine's stand, which is likely to lead to two different developments. He may seek to apply pressure on the ECB through the head of the Bundesbank, who will have a big influence over ECB decisions. The current Bundesbank president, Hans Tietmeyer, is due to retire next August, giving the new German government an opportunity to choose a replacement of a more Keynesian flavour.

The second option is to coordinate economic policy more closely at a political level through the euro-11 committee. Already ministers can do so via broad economic policy guidelines and these could be tightened, laying down targets for each country on a range of economic criteria. Along these lines, a paper being drawn up by the European Commission is expected to propose greater co-ordination of economic policy than Europe has ever known.

And that may mean the battle between bankers and politicians is only just beginning.

What the Treasury is really thinking

WHEN I rang Charlie Whelan yesterday for my weekly this-conversation-never-takes-place session, I was told he had headed off to the Barbados for "a few days hard-earned rest" and then put through to a junior spin doctor, Teller Troth. Our conversation seems worth reporting verbatim.

Independent on Sunday: ... OK, then, you tell me who Gordon Brown is.

Treasury: He's a shy man who has chosen to relate to the world through the medium of political power. He's the man who has made it his task, along with Ed and Demos, to modernise Labour Party economics.

IOS: The Third Way?
Treasury: The Third Way belongs to Mr. Mandelson. We're talking substance.

IOS: Substance as in the Chancellor's CBI speech and his pre-Budget statement last week?

Treasury: That's right.

IOS: What was the message of last week?

Treasury: As billed. The Chancellor believes the talk of a "global financial crisis" is seriously exaggerated. He notes that policy

makers have responded effectively to the fog end of a long upturn in the economic cycle. He believes we're in for a comparatively mild economic downturn.

IOS: No deflation?

Treasury: We're not headed back to the Thirties, no. The Chancellor's more clued up on the economic situation than all his critics combined. People go on about globalisation. The Chancellor knows globalisation from A to Z. He knows what a positive force globalisation is.

IOS: Doesn't globalisation mean too much of the credit system is in the hands of too few people? Doesn't that inevitably exaggerate the effects of the herd mentality at the expense of a rational allocation of credit? Hasn't globalisation put too much wealth in the hands of too few people to sustain adequate demand to keep the engines of industry turning over?

Treasury: Tosh.

IOS: Really? How come the Chancellor's economic forecasts were derided as overly optimistic? The pundits characterised the forecast of 1 per cent growth in 1999, rising to 2.5 per cent the year after,

and 3 per cent after that, as on "the outer edges of credibility". The tabloids characterised the Chancellor as "complacent" and "arrogant".

Treasury: The media wants politicians to get off the fence. Well, the Chancellor got off the fence. Either his forecasts are right, in which case he will be portrayed as a hero standing tall against nimbies like you talking down the economy. Or his forecasts are wrong, in which case the jackals will bay for his blood. You want to know what last week was really about? Last week was about the tabloids finally finding a way to personalise the global financial crisis story. Mr Brown is New Labour's DI.

IOS: Where do the Tories stand on all this?

Treasury: Nowhere. We keep waiting for the Tories to get their act together, but they don't.

IOS: You have any advice for them?

Treasury: Play the libertarian card. The one Mrs T played before she lost her patience with her social revolution and went for authoritarianism instead. The control freak charge levelled against Gordon has

CITY & BUSINESS



PETER KOENIG

legs to it. The Chancellor loves the people. But he doesn't trust 'em. The Tories could say the only way to improve economic performance long term is to trust the people. Give them more money to spend. Hague could say the best way to stimulate growth is to cut taxes for the least well off.

IOS: The Tories plumping for wealth redistribution?

Treasury: Why not? They've already lost big business as a result of their opposition to the single currency. You saw that in Birmingham. Who knows what might happen if they turned their Little Englanderism into a form of populism? There's plenty of mileage in the

Power to the European People theme. We tried it ourselves, remember, during Britain's presidency of the EU. But it never came to anything. Now the Government is cosying up to the new centre-left powers on the continent. One way to say that is the Government is getting sucked into the continental European establishment.

IOS: So what's the Chancellor's next move?

Treasury: He cools it. He waits for the interest-rate cuts to work. For a good Christmas for retailers. For the stock markets to continue their rebound. You know how much the Dow's down from the pre-Russia collapse level? Just 5 per cent.

IOS: What about productivity?

Treasury: He's serious about productivity. Boom or bust, UK plc is not going to compete against the Chinese on labour costs. Boom or bust, Germany is showing an impressive capacity to get its economic house in order. Look at Daimler's turnaround. Boom or bust, US foreign policy – globalisation – is ultimately about advancing the interests of Monsanto, Microsoft, and General Motors.

IOS: And yet Mr Brown loves

Washington so much he acts as the US Treasury's spokesman on globalisation.

Treasury: You have a point. That's where some of us think the Chancellor's being a bit naive.

IOS: So what's he going to do about productivity?

Treasury: Everything he's announced. Education, training, tax breaks.

IOS: That's it?

Treasury: A little guidance. We're working on something.

IOS: What?

Treasury: You didn't hear it from me. Even on deep background.

IOS: Fine.

Treasury: A one off. Drafts are circulating. We're working on a programme that's totally politically incorrect.

IOS: The Pol Pot Experiment.

Treasury: You know about it! You know, then, we're not going to start picking national champions again. But we are thinking of targeting information technology as an industrial sector.

IOS: What Taiwan did in the late 1970s.

Treasury: Better late than never, right? Anyway, the idea is to make

Britain the European landfall for global cyberspace companies. Admit for the internet, e-mail and e-commerce has to happen somewhere. Someone's got to keep rejigging the software. Why not us?

IOS: That doesn't sound so politically incorrect.

Treasury: The money we want to plough into UK IT. It's going to come with positive discrimination attached. There's loads of programmers out there, right? All sorts of techie graduates from further ed programmes? The idea is to find the entrepreneurs among these Essex men and women and invest in them. Reach beyond the charmed circle – the people with surnames you recognise. The Chancellor thinks ours is a culture with one tiny, homogeneous elite. He thinks it is the limitations of this elite that limit the nation's productivity.

IOS: But what would the Labour luvvies say?
Treasury: At this point Mr Troth took a call from Mr Whelan. From the beach, I'm told, holding his mobile in one hand and a pina colada in the other. Mr Whelan instructed Mr Troth to terminate our conversation.

Independent on Sunday, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14. Telephone 0171 293 2000. Fax: 0171 293 2096. E-mail: indybusiness@independent.co.uk

The telecoms giant has finally woken up to the future with a clutch of initiatives and joint ventures. It had to happen, says Peter Koenig

BT hooks up with the internet set

GLANCING round like a Chamber of Commerce man at an all-night rave, John Swingewood sized up the Yahoo! BT press conference last Wednesday morning and liked what he saw. Seated at a table beside him, a young woman was making extravagant hand gestures and saying things like: "Absolutely right. That's 24-7 and 365." Seated in front of him, twentysomething cyber-media reporters fired sceptical questions like: "How's the Yahoo!/BT joint venture going to compete against the Planet Online/Dixons Freeserve internet service?" But they seemed reluctantly impressed that a BT director had shown up on turf where the dress regime called for modified skateboard gear.

Wednesday's press conference was a product launch. On 30 November the formerly stuffy BT and the ultra-dudey, California-based "web portal site" company, Yahoo! will

begin offering UK customers a pay-as-you-go internet service called Yahoo Click. In contrast to standard dial-up internet services, including BT Internet itself, there will be no monthly subscription fee, usually about £12. Instead, customers will pay a penny a minute in addition to local call rates. For customers using the internet less than 12 hours a month, Yahoo Click should be cheaper.

But the Yahoo Click product launch was only one piece of a larger picture emerging from BT in recent weeks. The giant company, privatised in 1984, was the 64th largest company in the world in terms of market capitalisation at the start of the year. It reported pre-tax profits of £3.2bn on sales of £15.6bn in the last financial year.

This clout has traditionally come from three businesses: the UK business, now under attack from UK independents such as Colt Telecom, cable companies and foreign giants like

MCI WorldCom; the mobile phone business through Cell-phone; and the international side through its Concert alliance. Its plans for the US founded last year when it was outbid for MCI by the Mississippi-based startup, WorldCom.

Now, though, the internet is revolutionising telecom technology, not only because the internet means that data transmission is becoming bigger business than voice transmission, but also because voice is increasingly sent via internet packets – like highly compressed attachments to e-mails – rather than traditional switches.

Yahoo Click is part of the general announcement that BT is getting into the internet game. The game at this point is not so much to turn an immediate profit as to drum up interest in making Britain an internet society – to justify the billions invested in internet infrastructure. "I want to go into the millennium with everybody in the UK having an e-mail address," Mr Swingewood declared over cappuccino after the press conference.

BT is late in coming to terms with the internet. The worldwide web emerged as a factor a decade ago. There are now 5 million internet users in the UK – 1.5 million of these dial up from home. Yahoo! has competed fiercely in the UK against America On Line, Excite and other web portal sites to become the default screen of choice for internet users. France Télécom is far enough along in developing the internet market in its home market to have acquired an 80 per cent stake in the Danish internet access provider WEB A/S last month.

"BT was slightly slow off the mark with the internet," said Henderson Crosthwaite analyst Paul Sharma. "MCI World-

Com was quicker to offer data transmission. Demon was ahead in offering consumer internet services. Andersen Consulting was quicker in helping large companies set up intranets."

However, Mr Sharma says, BT should be thought of as a supertanker changing course. "It's migrating from a traditional network to an IP [internet protocol] network. It's begun to offer all sorts of internet services off the back of its IP network."

BT may be late coming to the internet, but said CSFB analyst Robert Millington, so what? "The internet is growing absolutely explosively," he pointed out.

Its initiative is welcomed by its rivals. "Anything that makes access to the internet easier is to be commended," said Mark Weeks, a spokesman for MCI WorldCom.

But BT also has problems being the 900lb gorilla on the UK block. Establishing BT Click – the plain vanilla pay-as-you-go internet service from which BT plans to create multiple versions of Yahoo Click with multiple joint-venture partners – the company won the close attention of telecoms watchdog Ofcom. This was because the Internet Service Providers Association, which primarily represents small independent dial-up services, cried "foul". It complained that BT was subsidising its Click service unfairly with funds from other businesses.

Because of its size, BT has set itself the challenge of competing across the board in cyberspace. But this will put it up against smaller, often formidable, rivals willing to do anything to defend their niches.

BT is moving into the internet not because it is hot to embrace the Information Age but



John Swingewood: 'I want to go into the millennium with everyone in the UK having an e-mail address'

MIKEL NICOLAOU

because it has to. Last week its UK managing director, Bill Cockburn, announced that more data than voice is travelling over BT's domestic network for the first time – internet, e-mail, e-commerce and intranets.

Responsibility for this epochal development in corporate strategy goes right to the top. "Sir Peter [Bonfield, chief executive] is pushing this," said Mr Swingewood. "He understands the technology."

BT's new strategic US partner, AT&T, is working with BT to push the two companies' internet businesses globally. Indeed, it is internationally that BT/AT&T will go head to head with the likes of MCI WorldCom. Both companies, and others, are investing to guarantee global business fast data transmission worldwide – voice will be a tiny niche add-on by 2003, according to forecasts.

Mr Swingewood is the main UK marketer. That means he not only has the fun of hang-

ing out in Covent Garden, he also has to nurture a portfolio of embryonic businesses.

Mr Swingewood divides his portfolio into consumer and business customers, and has created three categories of consumer businesses. He calls personal computer businesses "lean forward" businesses. These include BT Click and Yahoo Click. But he also plans to roll out pay-as-you-go internet access via such vehicles as shop catalogues.

The freshest competition comes from Planet Online, owned by Energis. In September, Planet Online and the retailer Dixons announced a dial-up internet service called Freeserve. The only cost attached to Freeserve is the phone charge for connecting to the web – plus £1 a minute if you ring the Freeserve help desk.

"We think Freeserve sets a new standard for dial-up services," said John Beaumont, Planet Online's managing director.

Mr Swingewood is also responsible for BT's "lean forward" internet consumer businesses – the ones to be delivered through television sets. Chief here is British Interactive Broadcasting, a joint venture with BSkyB, Midland Bank and the Japanese electronics giant, Matsushita. BIB is holding a press conference on Tuesday to announce its launch date and the names of the retailers selling their wares via the new television service.

Third, he is planning to introduce 2,500 pay phones next year at which customers can slot in credit cards and go online.

On the business side, he recently unveiled a "connect to business" internet service for small and medium-sized enterprises. "Only between 30 and 60 per cent of the SMEs are on the net, and they're not using it much," said Neil MacDonald, general manager of BT's corporate internet unit.

Connect-to-business "teaches SMEs how to use the internet," and helps them do things like check the credit status of suppliers and customers.

Mr MacDonald continued. "It helps them do things like check the credit status of suppliers and customers."

Mr Swingewood is cagey about BT Internet and Multimedia's profit and loss statement. He was quick to attribute start-up costs to other BT units, while explaining how his new services will be in profit from day one. "Take Yahoo Click," he said. "The development costs were peanuts."

Upon closer questioning, however, he conceded he is carrying at least some of the multi-billion BT investment in IP on his profit and loss statement.

That seems only fair. This week, BT reports its quarterly results. When it does, Mr Swingewood's division will be singled out as one of the company's fast-growing sectors. BT itself is probably only beginning to realise what the internet is going to do to its business. Chamber of Commerce man or not, Mr Swingewood better get on that skateboard and ride.

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Ayling flies into turbulent skies

BA's chief executive faces searching questions over airline's future

BY HILARY CLARKE

IT'S GOING to be a bad case of Monday morning blues for Bob Ayling. The chief executive of British Airways is to meet City analysts and journalists following the publication of the airline's interim results. While the results in themselves are expected to be respectable, Mr Ayling can expect some tough questions regarding the airline's future – and maybe his own.

Analysts expect the company to post a rise in second-quarter net profits of around 16 per cent to about £244m, from £210m in the same period last year. But profits should be up. Last year, a strike by cabin attendants knocked £110m off of BA's net earnings. Given that the aviation market was fairly robust, and that oil prices were at historical lows, you can bet City analysts will tell Mr Ayling he could have done much better.

But a less-than-stunning financial performance in the second quarter of the year was not the only trigger for a downgrading of earnings estimates on BA's annual results last week. City

brokers are concerned about falling business class travel revenue, caused by slowing global economic growth. The tell-tale signs were in BA's October statement on traffic and capacity. While the number of passengers rose by 0.3 per cent compared with last year, the number of business passengers – the biggest spenders – fell 2.4 per cent. That is because a number of BA's biggest customers, such as the investment bank Merrill Lynch, are cutting costs by ordering their staff to fly economy. Higher grade seats account for 15 per cent of passengers but 40 per cent of revenue. The airline is also continuing to feel the pinch of the strong pound.

And while BA's shares may have undergone a temporary rise when the company announced it was scaling down its planned alliance with American Airlines last week, the defeat of BA's strategy cornerstone added to the

negative sentiment on BA's stock. "Their international strategy is in tatters, oil prices are going to go up and sterling is still strong," said Alistair Gunn, airline analyst with Credit Lyonnais Securities. "That's why everyone is cutting their forecasts." BA shares closed the week down 10.5 pence at 453.5.

BA said last weekend it wants to phase in its alliance with American over five years because the price that EU regulators demanded to approve the alliance was too high. Brussels ordered BA to give up – for free – 267 transatlantic take-off and landing slots. If the economic climate had been better, that may have been acceptable to BA, especially if it had been allowed to sell those slots. However, because of the downturn, BA decided it was a safer bet to baton down the hatches

and create a "Fortress Heathrow". BA said it would merely tighten its marketing ties with AA, such as linking frequent flier programmes and sharing airport lounges.

However, US regulators are expected to give even the most modest arrangements a hard time. From now on, the Oneworld alliance with American, Canadian Airlines, Cathay Pacific and Qantas seems set to be the focus of BA's strategy. But the march has been stolen on BA by the competing Star Alliance, led by Lufthansa and United.

A worsening business climate for BA is likely to spur a call by analysts and investors for Mr Ayling to speed up his cost-saving programme. He has said he wants to make £1bn in savings by March 2000. However, it was his rough handling of the cost-cutting programme that triggered last year's strike. According to City analysts,

and calls made to this newspaper over recent weeks, morale among BA staff remains low.

Even though he has the reputation for being more diplomatic with analysts than his predecessor, Sir Colin (now Lord) Marshall, Mr Ayling will have a tough time answering questions on Monday.

"The underperformance of the share price and the downturn in profitability at BA has coincided with Ayling being appointed chairman," said one disgruntled BA analyst.

To be fair to Mr Ayling, Lord Marshall was always going to be a tough act to follow because he stepped down when BA's performance was at its peak, and things could only get worse. However, Mr Gunn said: "BA didn't capitalise on the good times. As the economy goes into a downturn, they still haven't solved a lot of problems."

While a BA spokesman dismissed as "nonsense" speculation that Mr Ayling's days at BA could be numbered, you just cannot help wondering.



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THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

Do interest rate cuts help?
asks George Magnus - p26

THE MOTLEY FOOL GUIDE

Part 3 of the best-selling
investment book - p20

Rip up treaty, urges US Air

American airline heads move to step up pressure on
UK over concessions on transatlantic flights

US AIR, one of America's top airlines, is spearheading a campaign by US carriers to press the Clinton administration to cancel the treaty that governs air traffic between the UK and the US.

The move follows the collapse last month of negotiations between the two countries that were designed to open up each other's air travel markets.

"The UK Government has shown that its only real interest is to deter competition and perpetuate its dominance of the US-UK market," Stephen Wolf, chairman of US Air, wrote in a letter to President Bill Clinton on 22 October.

"The UK simply is not prepared to permit the transatlantic marketplace to be governed by free competition. Under these conditions, only one option remains: renounce Bermuda 2."

Bermuda 2 is the agreement that has been in force between the two nations since 1977. US government officials

BY STEVEN SOLOMON IN
WASHINGTON AND
HILARY CLARKE IN LONDON

and airline executives believe it has given UK carriers, especially BA, advantages in the transatlantic market. Their chief grievance is what they see as a stranglehold on air slots in and out of Heathrow. British carriers control more than half of the transatlantic air traffic.

Mr Wolf is lobbying chief executives of the other five big US airlines to endorse his call for treaty renunciation. "If the five other carriers support renunciation, this would strongly influence the US position," said Patrick Murphy, at the US Department of Transportation. Leo Mullin, president of Delta Airlines, has already voiced support for Mr Wolf. However, he has said he was not yet ready to support renunciation.

On 3 November, United Airlines, a main partner in the global Star Alliance, a power-

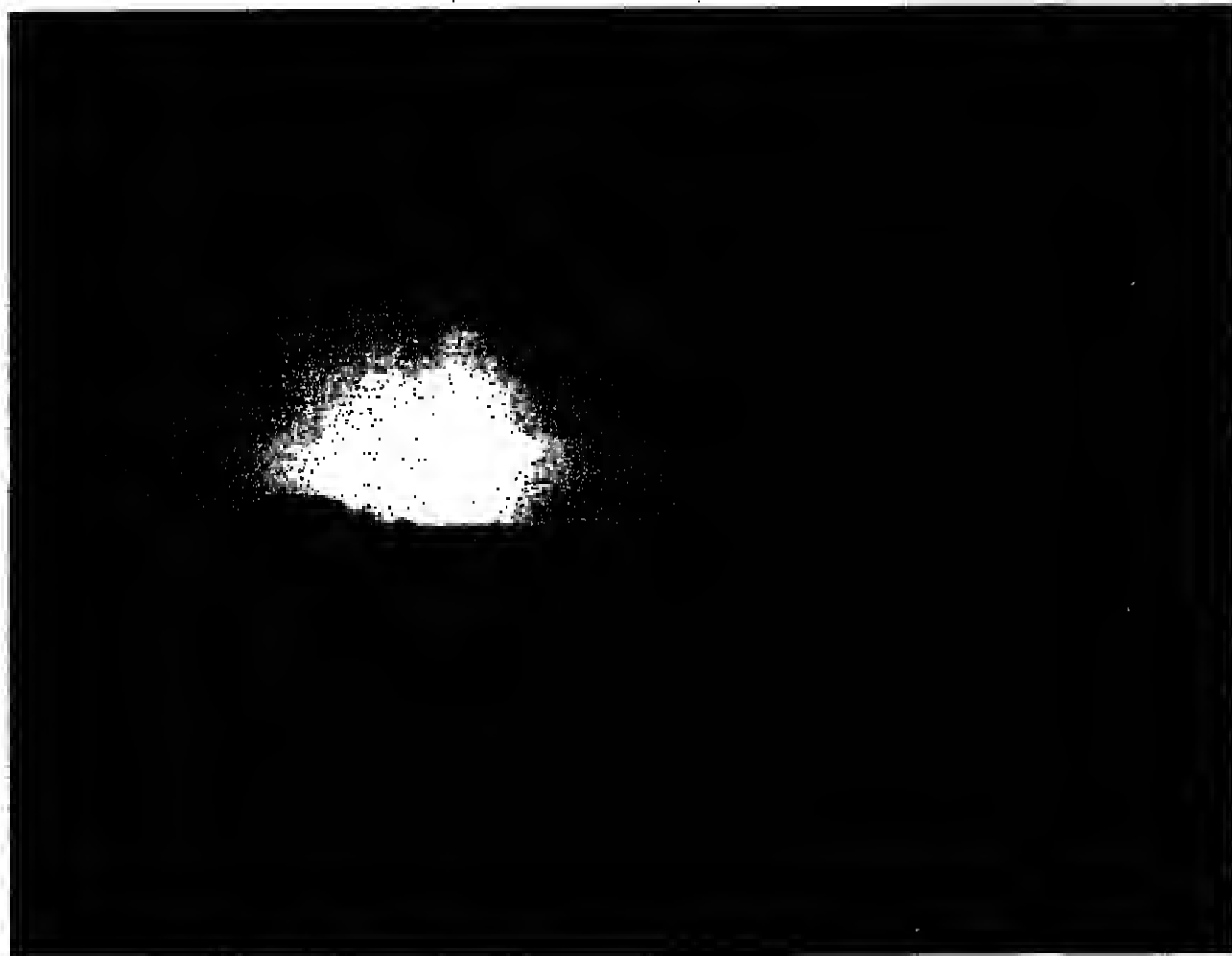
ful competitor to BA's Oneworld alliance, weighed in with a sharp rebuke of the UK and BA for the talks' collapse.

"In the face of a slowing UK economy, BA has rediscovered the concept of a Fortress Heathrow," said Cyril Murphy, United's vice-president. The US has made an open-skies agreement a precondition for regulatory approval of the now-troubled alliance between BA and American Airlines.

Unilateral renunciation of Bermuda 2 would allow the US to impose tough route and landing restrictions on BA, which would in turn be likely to force the British government to negotiate a new treaty.

"US Air is taking a fairly confrontational approach," said Austin Reid, managing director at British Midland.

Given the poisoned atmosphere, US regulators seem determined not to allow BA any benefits until a new bilateral treaty is negotiated. That could mean that the regulators refuse



Dawning resentment: British companies control the lion's share of trade across the Atlantic

JOHN LAWRENCE

to approve even the most modest marketing agreements between BA and AA, who have decided to phase in a proposed alliance over five years after EU regulators demanded 267 slots be coded at Heathrow. US officials also accuse the

UK of reneging on past commitments to renegotiate Bermuda 2. "We think the US-British aviation agreement is a disgrace," said Mr Murphy. "We hate it."

US and UK negotiators met on 5 October for the first time

since 1997. The meeting ended with the US delegation walking out because it felt the UK had brought nothing new to the talks.

"BA would like an immunised monopoly," said one insider. "But a regulated

oligopoly is still pretty good." In 1976, the UK renounced the existing treaty and threatened to close the UK market to American aviation unless a new treaty was negotiated to help the survival of the then-unprofitable BA.

Lucas to stay British firm

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

THE STRATEGY of LucasVarity, and the credibility of its chief executive, Victor Rice, lay in tatters yesterday after shareholders defeated in a down-to-the-wire vote his plans to move the car parts and aerospace group to the US.

The shock result is a coup for several UK institutions, including Schroders and Legg and General, which were seriously opposed the move. It is certain to fuel speculation on the future of Mr Rice. After a tense night of vote counting, the company announced that the proposed move of its headquarters and primary stock market listing from London to the States had not been approved by the required number of shareholders.

In a terse statement, Lucas said that it had won one of the two votes but had lost the vital second ballot by the thinnest of margins. The company said its proposal had received approval from the holders of 74.42 per cent of its shares, just short of the 75 per cent required. That was enough to block the proposed move, even though Lucas won a simple majority of shareholders who voted. Turnout, at around 80 per cent, was in line with expectations.

Analysts said that the defeat in the 75-per-cent-majority needed vote was extraordinary because more than 60 per cent of Lucas shares are in the hands of US shareholders, who were widely believed to be in favour of a transfer to the US.

Mr Rice remained tight-lipped in the aftermath of the defeat, leaving the company's chairman, Ed Wallis, to say that it was "business as usual" and that strategy was unchanged.

However, industry experts said that the defeat would fuel criticism of Mr Rice's poor relationship with shareholders and of his perceived inability to explain the rationale for the move to rebellious institutions.

LucasVarity formed in 1994 from the merger of Lucas Industries and Varity of the US. It had argued that a move to the US would boost its share price and enable it to raise cheap capital for acquisitions.

UK shareholders, however, opposed the move because it would have deprived them of Lucas FTSE 100 stock, leaving them with illiquid second rate paper. UK shareholders said Lucas's reason for leaving Britain was unconvincing, noting that the company had reassured the market that it would remain UK-based at the time of the merger.

Merged market puts £3bn tax in jeopardy

BY DAVID BRIERLEY

TREASURY income from stamp duty on shares - around £3bn a year - is threatened by the creation of a pan-European stock market.

Leading London investment houses are pressing the Treasury to abolish stamp duty because it will place the City at a competitive disadvantage once the pan-European stock exchange is established. The UK taxes share transactions of individual investors at 0.5 per cent, while Germany abolished stamp duty on shares in 1990.

The impending merger of the London Stock Exchange and the Deutsche Borse has made the problem more urgent. Unless the tax system is changed, trading in UK stocks could be routed through Frankfurt once merged operations begin.

One solution would be to negotiate a common stamp tax as part of the City-Frankfurt merger. But it will not be easy to achieve. Stamp duty was abolished in Germany after a long campaign and would be difficult to reimpose, while the

Treasury is unlikely to remove it on share trading in the UK. As one official remarked: "It is one of the least painful ways of filling the state's coffers."

Behind the scenes, leading City firms and the London Stock Exchange are lobbying hard. They are backing an initiative launched in May by the European Commissioner for the Single Market, Mario Monti, to eliminate discriminatory taxation in financial services.

Mr Monti said: "The introduction of the euro requires member states to make their markets more flexible and efficient. We have to increase the efficiency of our taxation systems and avoid harmful fiscal competition."

Last Wednesday, Gavin Casey, head of the London Stock Exchange, and Werner Seifert, the head of the Deutsche Borse, unveiled their latest merger plans to representatives of leading investment houses in London and Frankfurt.

In a move that prepares the ground for a full merger, members of one exchange will be able to access the other directly from 1999. To improve liquidity and lower trading costs, British stocks will only be traded in London and German stocks only in Frankfurt. In the first instance, the agreement will cover the 2,000 stocks traded by the Xetra trading system in Frankfurt and the 134 stocks marketed through the Sets electronic system in London.

Market participants welcomed the announcement, which paves the way for high liquidity and heavy trading in leading European companies. Some smaller stockbrokers in London were critical, however, about the costs they might face on trading in German shares.

A spokesman for the Paris Bourse, which has taken umbrage at the Anglo-German alliance, poured cold water on the latest development.

He said: "I don't see what this does for investors who want to participate in a pan-European market."

BIB launches TV shopping

BY HILARY CLARKE AND NIGEL COPE

BRITISH Interactive Broadcasting is expected to announce on Tuesday that it will launch its television service at the start of next year and will be broadcasting home shopping channels sponsored by Great Universal Stores, a leading retailer, and Tesco, the nation's number one supermarket chain.

Coming on the heels of digital television launches by BSkyB last month and OnDigital on 15 November, the start-up will give viewers more new channels and the capacity to buy items ranging from washing machines to soap powder at the push of a telly zapper.

British Interactive Broad-

casting (BIB), which is jointly owned by BSkyB, BT, Midland Bank, and Matsushita - the Japanese electronics giant - won official European Union approval on 22 October to go on air, after the European Commission took a close look at the market clout already enjoyed by BSkyB and BT. The Commission threatened in March to block the venture if BSkyB and BT abused their positions as the UK's dominant pay-TV provider and phone company.

BIB is set to offer home banking, games, and internet access as well as home shop-

ping. There is speculation that Midland will sponsor the home banking channel.

The new broadcaster will face competition from cable companies, which are also planning to offer high-speed internet services through television.

"We shall be working to make the channels very attractive, very much television, not like computers," said John Swingewood, the BT director on BIB's main board.

Other retailers may soon join in. "We're talking to BIB," said John Clare, Dixons' group chief executive.

The effect of a heavily subsidised marketing campaign for interactive shopping is likely to have unpredictable consequences on retailing patterns. Great Universal Stores (GUS), through its home shopping unit, is a natural user of BIB, because of the company's history as a mail-order retailer. BIB is also expected to boost sales for Argos, recently acquired by GUS.

The economics of interactive broadcasting remain unclear. Start-up investment has exceeded £300m. BSkyB plans to subsidise the cost of the set-top receivers, halving the price to around £200.

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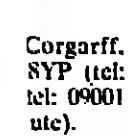
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WORKING page 11

The ultimate bad trip

Could drugs cost you your job?



Enter the Nuppie ...

He's young and upwardly mobile, but he isn't wearing a suit and he swears that happiness, not money, is his aim. **Matt Munday** reports

Recently, as I was travelling to work by Tube, I noticed that my carriage was occupied by a particular kind of commuter. The time was around 10 o'clock in the morning. Most of the capital's suits had already commenced their daily grind, having endured the clammy claustrophobia that is the London Underground during peak hours.

Those reclining in the now half-empty carriage were in their late twenties and early thirties. They were wearing puffa waistcoats, hiking boots, Carhartt sweatshirts and combat trousers. An inordinately high number of the men were sporting goatee beards. These urban professionals, working in media, music, fashion and marketing are the group that, more than any other, growing numbers of college leavers aspire to join.

In the latest edition of *Arena Homme Plus*, writer Marco Santucci suggests that these urban creatives may be the nearest thing the Nineties has to the Eighties' yuppie. They are young, talented, upwardly mobile, but on the surface less money-orientated than their Porsche-driving, champagne-swilling ancestors.

"For them, the recession actually created opportunities," Santucci writes. "Media companies were slimming down and replacing fat-salaried forty-somethings with young freelancers: studios and offices could be had at knockdown rates; and the post-acid house pop culture was throwing up new codes and lifestyles that only those of a certain age could interpret. There grew out of this a generation of creatives and media workers, usually working for themselves or in collectives, and often concerned with making their work fun and non-exploitative."

Nineties urban professionals – nuppies – make money as a consequence of lifestyle rather than pursuing it as an end in itself. Their aim instead is to both produce and consume cultural "cool". They like high-quality sound systems, minidisks, Playstations, the Internet, loft apartments in East London, deep house, hip hop and drum'n'bass. They are obsessed with popular culture, which is unsurprising given that they have been bombarded with media images, not to mention brand advertising, all their lives.

They say they would rather enjoy their work than pursue six-figure salaries. They refuse to "sell out" to what they perceive as faceless corporations (companies the nuppies so desperately wanted to work for) for fear that they will lose their individuality. Many say they have developed a more ethical approach to business ("Don't shaft people, look after people," as one urban creative puts it). They don't want to wear suits.

"It has been wonderful to grow up and find that I can do a job that I actually enjoy," says 33-year-old Geoff Glendenning. Glendenning co-runs Third Planet, a marketing consultancy which includes MTV among its current crop of clients, and which has, in the past, completed projects for the

Ministry of Sound and trendsetting record labels Junior Boy's Own and Perfecto.

"I wore a suit for years," he continues. "I worked in advertising during the Eighties, which was quite aspirational in that decade, and I found that, generally speaking, it was full of gits. They were paranoid, insecure and didn't know what the hell they were talking about. There are many advertising people to this day who are still living in the Eighties, but increasingly, advertising in the Nineties is more about honesty and subtlety – rather than saying, 'We're

Nuppies make money as a consequence of lifestyle rather than pursuing it as an aim in itself. Their aim is to produce and consume cultural cool'

huge, we're speeding loads of cash."

Money, the Nineties urban professional will swear, isn't the be all and end all. To the Eighties yuppie, on the other hand, the only thing more important than accumulating cash was making sure everyone knew how much you had. This was the decade of flashy docklands bachelor pads, of putting your credit card behind the bar and your employers picking up the tab, of living fast and (due to the amount of cocaine you took) talking even faster, of double-crossing your colleagues, your boss, your friends – anyone standing between you and the top rung of the ladder.

Nuppies set themselves up as something else. It's easy to be critical – to say that this

They say they would rather enjoy their work than pursue six-figure salaries. The refuse to sell out to corporations for fear they will lose their individuality'

group is aspiring in just the same way but in a different world; that they use culture and ideas as currency in the same way their predecessors used cash – cynically; but the nuppies insist that they're different.

"I don't think I'm as materialistic as the yuppies were," says Dawn Weller, 30, a successful freelance stylist and merchandiser. "I'm a very ambitious person, but I'm not particularly competitive. I don't really care what anyone else is doing. The impression

I have is that the Eighties yuppie was out to get everyone else. I don't have any desire to be the best at everything. I just want to be good at what I do."

Thirty-year-old Mark Westall runs Hard Reality, a new-media marketing company whose current client roster includes Express Newspapers and Haymarket Business Publishing. Hard Reality offers guidance to clients wishing to "take advantage of the digital age". This can mean anything from devising online advertising campaigns to assisting a company with internal communications. Westall also happens to have spent the late Eighties going to Shoom, Danny Rampling's legendary club, heralded by many as the place where the UK acid house explosion began.

"I've always wanted to make money..." he says, sounding suspiciously like a yuppie. "Well, not so much make money as run my own business. At the end of the day if you're going to run a business, you want it to be successful. At heart, I guess, I'm a capitalist. "But I don't think money is as important as having a job you like. I mean, I didn't want to work for someone else. That was more important to me than money. I could go and work in the City and earn far more cash than I do now, but I don't want to do that. I don't want to be tied down to a big organisation and to have to do that nine-to-five thing."

Not everyone is convinced that the growing number of British urban creatives bodes well for the future. "There's no doubt that we are seeing a change in large numbers of peoples' working lives," says Peter York, the social commentator. "This is as much due to the decline of manufacturing in this country as anything else. It worries me because that decline is further and faster in this country than in other European countries. If you are going to be competitive in the world, you need to be represented in a wider range of industries than we are. It's very nice to have a high export music industry, for example, but it's not enough."

Portentous this may be, but it will take more than the imminent collapse of our economy to stem the growing popularity of media studies degrees, as students dream of becoming the next Jo Whalley, Pete Tong or Lisa L'Anson. In the Nineties, Britain's brightest young things want to live the designer-slacker life. They want to direct the next Budweiser commercial, make drum'n'bass records, go snowboarding, hang out in Hoxton Square and sleep with one of the girls from All Saints (or boys from Another Level). Preferably all in the same weekend.

There is a further cautionary note for all the potential Nineties urban professionals, one which might make that career in engineering seem a more enticing prospect after all. It comes from Marco Santucci. "At the individual level," he explains, "there is often little or no distinction between their work and their lifestyle. Nineties urban professionals find themselves submerged in their work to a ridiculous degree. They can't switch off."

After all, it's not as if they can escape their jobs by turning on the telly, or going clubbing, is it?



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Party On Cayte Williams

A word of advice to all you party-lovers: never wear high heels to a King's Cross venue. Vertigo-inducing silver sandals were not a wise choice for the FilmFour launch, held in one of those cavernous concrete clubs. The entrance was worthy of a *Krypton Factor* obstacle course. First one had to negotiate a strobe-lit corridor (staggering in bright light is difficult enough; under flashing lights it's impossible) only to be confronted by a gravel path. I half-expected Gordon Kay to hand out medals at the end.

However, the trauma was worth it as we emerged into an ante-room dotted with marvellous installations. (They looked rather like giant pop socks – is this the latest in knee-high chic?) The vodka cocktails flowed all night and glamorous people poured from one room to another. There was a "Naked" room where exotic dancers made *Dirty Dancing* look like *Mary Poppins*. There were even steamier scenes from forthcoming FilmFour delights on a big screen, and I must admit boogying to Joan Jett while watching art-porn is quite an experience.

Feeling a little peckish, we stumbled into the *Pulp Fiction*-style burger bar, complete with shoot-out victims playing dead, and finally hit upon a sort of microchip disco room where who should we find but the magnanimous Mr Jonathan Ross. "I'm here with my friends Adam and Joe," he revealed, before discussing our mutual friend, the lovely Ms Cerys Matthews who had once distracted him with her exploding nipples. Apparently, it was

something to do with a cold TV studio.

We spotted rising talent Rufus Sewell, who told us he'd just come back from filming in *Papua New Guinea* and was about to begin a run on the London stage as Macbeth. Should be a hoot! And rumour had it that Ewan MacGregor and Jude Law were in the throng but they were impossible to notice. We played "spot the real Ewan and Jude" but to no effect. There were so many lookalikes that we gave up and went to the bar. And who should we find there but George Wendt, current star of *Art* and *ex-Cheers* hero, Norm. Perhaps it was the lack of Sam the Barman, or a non-Boston atmosphere, but the dear man looked terrified. "Are you in the queue?" I enquired politely, but he just stared back, shook his

head and looked dumbstruck. Perhaps it was the shoes.

There were no such shenanigans at the launch of *The Gate* theatre's new season, staged at Pharmacy (re-named *Army Chap*) and attended by such luminaries as The Royal Court's Stephen Daldry. My companion for the evening was the lively young actress Miss Glenna Morrison, whose mission was to imbibe as many exotic-looking cocktails as the head barman could muster. Needless to say we ended up in a W11 local with artistic director Mick Gordon regaling us with stories of his *Beavers* days (a sort of pre-Cubs group). A merry night was had by all.

The Electricity Showrooms in Hoxton Square, Shoreditch, is an interior designer's dream: rather like stepping into the pages of *Wallpaper**. The decor is desperately minimal (think Seventies council flat chic) and everyone wears black. The cool hotspot was celebrating the opening of the downstairs bar with its extended license and an array of Friday night DJs. Be there and be Hoxton Square.

Hero Brown is back next week.



With Jonathan Ross and nipple stories...



...and an outing with Matthew Parris

J.P. 11/10/98



Fashion's pearly queen

You've got as much time as you like." For a journalist angling for the maximum information on Vivienne Westwood's life, the formidable designer's pronouncement is not only fabulous news but, coming from one so busy, something of a shock. But then this is Westwood all over. The 57-year-old designer inhabits a parallel universe with an entirely different timescale. Her replies are meandering, mercurial monologues, as voluminous as her crinolines: her sump-tuous, floor-length versions, redolent of a less hurried age, mind, not her short, flirty mini-crinolines – or Crinis. And she eschews all abbreviations. She speaks (if at all) on the "telephone", not the phone. Her first perfume is called Boudoir, not VV1. And she despises minimalism, an aesthetic borne of modernism's love of speed.

But what of her reputation? Is the voluble, unrushed Westwood the battleaxe of legend? Hardly. She is sometimes patrician. (People – not her, of course – are mainly "uneducable" and she allows herself the luxury of madly contradicting herself.) But she is also gentle, retiring, naïve, romantic and undeniably bonkers.

So here we are dallying in wayward Westwood's Conduit Street showroom, ostensibly to publicise the news that she is the first designer to be honoured by Moët & Chandon and the Victoria & Albert Museum's newly launched, televised Fashion Tribute. This annual award goes to "a leading light from the world of fashion whose creativity and vision ... has had a profound influence on our lifestyle". "Designers and performers from across the globe", the press release declares, will gather to celebrate Westwood's entire oeuvre, in the museum's Raphael Gallery, dedicated to the history of fashion. Just up rarefied Westwood's street?

Not exactly. In fact, she is not overly keen to promote the event. Dressed in a chic, black and white Westwood-meets-Chanel card and skirt set, Chanel-esque pearls and raspberry tights, her hair the colour and consistency of a lightly caramelised meringue, she makes only the most perfunctory attempts to weave it into the conversation. In fact, it's safe to assume the idea bores her rigid. In the course of a typically rambling answer to the question, "Can fashion influence attitudes?", she feels momentarily duty-bound to say: "And about this thing at the V&A ... Museums are very important. They give people an idea of different values. It might not deepen their understanding, but at least you can start to get a broader experience..."

But she soon admits to dreading the event. "I'm not looking forward to having an enormous room full of different people ... this film being made where people are praising me..."

In fact, Westwood is being true to herself. She often bemoans today's obsession with marketing. "I'm different from any other designer, business-wise, in that I've built this company up and I own it. I never had business hype behind me to promote my image ... My image is real ... I have never had marketing people telling me what to do."

So, in her languid, chalky-soft Derbyshire tones, she chats eagerly about a plethora of other subjects: how she hated London on her visits there after moving from Derbyshire, to Harrow, in Middlesex, aged 17; the lamentable Americanisation of the world; her contempt for Tony Blair; the irrelevance of feminism. She loves thorny topics. And, as someone who takes her integrity very seriously, and prides herself on being ultra-rational – she can't talk highly enough of "ideas" – she doesn't mind if her contradictory statements are challenged. Even so, initially she is rather defensive, and bristles when interrupted. Interject and she will swiftly stop you with an "And I do feel...". Adding that final point to her answer to the previous question is her way of ever so gently keeping the upper hand.

Asked whether she realised she was less conventional than her parents early on, she replies, rather stiffly: "Yes, politically. I really cared about human suffering. I think I'll leave it there. I don't ... I don't like to dwell on things like that..." Then, changing her mind, and opening up a little, she expands: "I don't think my parents were conventional, really. Although I expect they were. My mother always voted Conservative."

Westwood was born Vivienne Swire in Glossop, Derbyshire, in 1941. Her father worked at Walls, the food company; her mother at a greengrocer. In Harrow, her parents ran a post office. Westwood preferred her Derbyshire days. "I was allowed to go out until I felt like coming home." She was fiercely independent: "I did my mother's shopping when I was three on a little tricycle." She protected lame ducks. At school, taking pity on a boy who'd been ostracised, she declared to everyone that he was her boyfriend.

She's starting to relax and is becoming more animated and intimate. She loathed London, she says. "It was so cliquey," she grumbles, before going off on a dotty tangent, a tirade against the superficiality of London's style press – "For example, a magazine like *The Face* – just the title, *The Face*..." Then she jumps back in time: "When I first got to London, I went dancing. And somebody asked me to dance, which I expected. But then nobody asked me to because I didn't dance like them. That would never have happened where I came from ... I didn't like Ronnie Scott's. I preferred a big band with all the people dancing. The kids would be jiving round the edge, or whatever..."

Westwood taught at a primary school for a year. She married Derek Westwood at 21. They had a son, Ben, but the marriage didn't last. Then came her

INTERVIEW

Vivienne Westwood is still at it: winning awards for her clothes, living with a man half her age, and as batty and opinionated as ever.

By Dominic Lutyens

IN HER OWN WORDS

On youth

"The last people with any ideas are the young. The age in which we live, this non-stop distraction, is making it more impossible for the young generation to ever have curiosity or discipline."

On culture

"Popular culture is a contradiction in terms. If it's popular, it's not culture. If everyone loves it, it's not original."

On her lover

"He opens my eyes to things. I learn a lot from him despite the fact that he's not much more than half my age."

On punk

"I was a punk before it got its name. I had that hairstyle and purple lipstick. Girls stopped me in the street and said 'Look at the state of that!'."

On marketing

"I've never had business hype behind me to promote my image ... my image is real."

On coming to London

"I didn't like Ronnie Scott's. I preferred a big band with all the people dancing."

relationship with Malcolm McLaren. (Their son Joe now runs Soho lingerie shop Agent Provocateur with Serena Rees; they have an 18-month-old daughter, Cora.) For a while, Westwood sold jewellery on Portobello Road – "I was sticking together little square beads with bits you could buy from an electrical shop ... little cogs."

McLaren was the first of a succession of male sven-gals high-culture junkie Westwood has looked to provide her with knowledge. Just as Madonna has a personal trainer, Westwood has an intellectual mentor – Gary Nessler, who "directs my reading and ensures I'm a fit reader". She says of her current 32-year-old Austrian husband and co-designer, Andreas Kronthaler: "He opens my eyes to things ... I learn a lot from him despite the fact he's not much more than half my age."

Westwood met Kronthaler when she taught him in Vienna. Did she instantly fancy him? Her response is typically spiritual: "I expect affinity is the first thing. You realise that that person is more interesting to you than anybody else in that situation." Their glaring age difference (25 years) doesn't come between them. Westwood openly admits that Kronthaler is a latchkey lover. Some might think she is playing with fire but Westwood, who seems refreshingly secure about her age, is utterly confident that he won't leave her. Why should she worry? The mere fact that he's a pattern-cutting genius is enough to send her into raptures. "When I met him, he knew more about couture fabrics than I did. How in work with them, how to keep them alive."

Back in the early Seventies, Westwood, along with McLaren, helped lay punk's foundations with their cult King's Road shops Let It Rock (flamboyant Teddy Boy drapes), Too Fast To Live, Too Young To Die (biker gear with proto-punk zips and rips), Sex (sex-shop fetishwear as fashion) and Seditionaries (full-on, bondage-up-your-punk gear). She is proud enough of her punk days to proclaim: "I was a punk before it got its name..." "I had that hairstyle and purple lipstick," she says, suddenly sounding like a thirty-something fondly recalling her years as a punkette. "Girls stopped me in the street and said, 'Why do you wear purple lipstick?' or 'Look at the state of that!'." She astutely ditched punk after realising, "my ideas were being exploited. At that point I started to look into history," says she who created the Crinis – not to mention wittily reinterpreted Harris Tweed, two-steps, tartan, Watteau-esque frocks and codpieces.

Designing for youth now holds no appeal. "It's a waste of time," she sighs. "The last people with any ideas are young people." Overall, she feels sorry for the young, though. "The age in which we live, this non-stop distraction, is making it more impossible for the young generation to ever have the curiosity or discipline ... Because you need to be alone to find out anything." Non-stop distraction? "This plethora

of everything ... From sound to the latest opinions, I call them opinions but they're not opinions. It's just the last thing somebody said but it doesn't mean anything ... It's this bombardment by the media. You can't think if you watch television."

Today's youngsters also face the twin evils of Blair and Americanisation, she says. Westwood votes Labour, yet, as a rugged individualist, believes politics changes nothing. Blair is wrong-headedly smitten with democratisation. "Popular culture is a contradiction in terms. If it's popular it's not culture. If everybody loves it, it's not original ... It's dreadful to have the Dome. Domesday, someone referred to it as." She is tickled by a pun she feels is spot-on.

A Gitanes-smoking Francophile, she sees hope only in the study of French culture, which, thanks to its freethinking tradition borne of the French revolution, is far superior to English culture. Feminism, she feels, is a red herring, too. I suspect this is a defence mechanism. She wrongly assumes feminists are anti-sex, so perhaps believes they decry her saucier frocks. Not to mention the diaphanous knickerless outfit she twirled about in at Buck Palace the day she collected her OBE. "Women are different from men," she affirms. "They shouldn't try to be like men in a man's world. These kind of women like Margaret Thatcher ... Let's impress ... let's make the telephone call that sinks the ... what's it called? The Belgaroo?"

Yet like Thatcher she's convinced she'd have got to where she is without the women's movement. "I've always felt heroic about my life ... As a child, I remember little girls in the playground moaning about how boys could do more than they could. I didn't think that was the case at all. My parents didn't treat me as a girl."

How would the former primary school teacher, the ex-queen of punk, bring up her own children now? "I'd try to impose more discipline through their education, which is very, very difficult. You can tie a horse to a trough but you can't make it drink. Neither wanted to go to university. They wanted to go out into the world and earn their living ... They were both good readers from an early age. My oldest son is still a reader. But Joe is caught up in his business at the moment. I'm afraid." She sounds a little disapproving, then makes a surprisingly maternal comment. "I'm looking forward to this granddaughter of mine ... being able to introduce her to books."

At that, in readiness for her photograph, fashion's queen of haroque n'roll rises from her chair in her vertiginous Westwood stacks and heads slowly towards a full-length mirror, topped with the company's orb logos. Ever the Francophile, she asks if my first name ends in "ique". Then, very languidly, very coquettishly, she dabs her mouth with lipstick. I'm immediately reminded of her earlier words to me: "You've got as much time as you like."

WHY ARE THEY FAMOUS

Catherine Zeta Jones

Main Claim: Chubby-cheeked great British hope gone off the boil. Winsome Welsh maidly stunner in ITV's ancient hit *The Darling Buds of May* turned Hollywood disappearing act. Now, however, our girl Zeta, as the tabloids so carelessly refer to her, has risen from the moribund to kicking-and-screaming stardom in her role in *The Mask of Zorro*, alongside proper supernova Antonio Banderas. And this week, she has been named Most Outrageously Beautiful Actress, an award which was previously given to Hollywood celebrity writers to Kate Winslet and Gwyneth Paltrow.

Appearance: Posh Spice's prettier sister. James Bond girl meets low budget Hardy heroine. Heroine of *Murphy on the Bounty* mini-series. The "sultry" brooding summer, the "exotic" hot blooded brunette, is in fact a Welsh 29-year-old raised near Swansea. But there you go.

Wild Child: Catherine had a singing, dancing, home-loving childhood in the bosom of a close family, like so many of those little British stage girls – see Letitia Dean, Dani Behr, Bonnie Langford. At four, the poppet stood on her grandmother's table grasping

a kettle lead as a microphone in her tiny paw, and "sang her heart out". Bless. Little Cathy-bach. The formidable stage-struck infant won a Biffin's talent contest at 10, and at 11 she was starring in the West End. "From an early age Catherine knew what she wanted," says her mother. She now lives in Malibu, hobnobs with Sir Anthony Hopkins, and has just finished filming the £50m thriller *Entrapment* alongside Sean Connery.

My Brilliant Career: How many famous/stylish/desirable Welsh superstars can you name?

Try to make it to two hands. It's like coming from New Zealand – there's little to lose, so you may as well have a go, eh? "I never doubted myself. I never thought I was wasting my time," says our determined young heroine.

Love's Labours: Our heroine's first love was a film producer with a grey pony tail, one Nick Hamm. She was also engaged to *Blue Peter* presenter John Leslie. A *Blue Peter* presenter, eh? Tut tut. She then nearly married *Soldier, Soldier*'s Angus MacFadyen before newspaper reports linked her with

actor Paul McGann. She is also said to have had a four-month relationship with that handsome Mick Hucknall. Next one, please? A humble Swansea plumber, perhaps? A provincial relief postal worker?

Fame Prospects: Film director Michael Winner allegedly describes Ms Zeta Jones as "just a former dancer". But grit, steel and contacts as well as a voluptuous way with a smoulder should see our Welsh lovely through any number of ups and downs. Just watch the pouty one triumph.



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Caught on the couch

Once you know a bit about her therapist, you'll know a whole lot more about Monica Lewinsky. **Ruth Morris** reports

BACK IN JANUARY, when all was still conjecture and denial, a Los Angeles TV station owed by Rupert Murdoch landed a scoop and unwittingly threw it back. It was an interview with a local pop psychologist, Dr Irene Kassoria, about the newly uncovered Monica Lewinsky. "How many 21-year-olds Dr Kassoria asked: 'Would resist if the president of the United States tapped on their vaginas and said 'How about it?'"

What no one realised at the time was that this was not a question but an explanation. For, as the Starr report has revealed, Dr Kassoria was the quiet voice in Ms Lewinsky's ear during the dark and dirty doings in the Oval Office. And, as her shrink, she could show, but not tell.

Until recently, Dr Kassoria has been regarded in the same way as her hooks: that is, somewhat out of print. Her various tomes include *Go For It!* (1984), *Pump Up Your Ego* (audiocassette, 1986) and the slightly best-selling *Nice Girls Do* and *Now You Can Too!* (1983).

But Dr Kassoria, PhD University of London, managed to get by. She lived – and still does – with her computer tycoon husband Norman Friedman, behind 14ft gates on the site of Jack Benny's home in fancy Holmby Hills. The practice also ticks along nicely. There are enough troubled celebrities for Dr Kassoria to borrow an endorsement from the minor comedian Merv Griffin in her promotional material – Shrink to the Stars.

These were the circumstances in which Marcia Lewis called Dr Kassoria, over six years ago now, to seek professional help for her daughter, Monica. Ms Lewis, something of a celebrity traffic-hound herself, was going through a messy

divorce with Dr Bernard Lewinsky and was worried about the effect on her little one.

In particular, there seems to have been an incident when Monica lost a parking space she had been waiting 15 minutes for. Then a student at Santa Monica College, she arrived home streaked in mascara and sobbing so wretchedly that mom reached at once for the *Yellow Pages*.

They meet at intervals, for the next five years.

As Kenneth Starr's report has revealed, Dr Kassoria was the quietest voice in Ms Lewinsky's ear during the dark and dirty doings in the Oval Office. And, as her shrink, she could show, but not tell

Ms Lewinsky recovered her equilibrium, graduated from Lewis and Clark College, in Oregon, and made her way to the White House as an intern. Dr Kassoria filed away her case notes under Monica Lewis, presumably because mom was paying the bills.

The official records show that Kenneth Starr caught up with Dr Kassoria at the end of August in the offices of her lawyer at Century City Park, Los Angeles. The doctor had hired two other attorneys, including one from Washington. She asked that the proceedings not be made public, and

was told by Starr's office that this might not be possible. Starr did black out her age – she is generally thought to be in her early sixties.

Under questioning, Dr Kassoria revealed that she had advised Ms Lewinsky against her affair with the President. "Kassoria was shocked and surprised at the relationship," the Starr report says, "but believed Lewinsky, 'to be truthful from the start'."

Later on, says the testimony, "Kassoria advised Lewinsky on multiple occasions that she was an employee having an office romance with a superior, that she would ultimately lose her job and would have bad references for future jobs. Kassoria tried to prepare Lewinsky for the desperate ego blow that would result when she would be fired to protect the President." At an early stage, doctor and patient agreed to refer to the President only as "Elizabeth" on the phone and call him a her.

What quality of advice did the doctor give, though? Some of it was practical. She suggested locking the doors during their sexual encounters to avoid discovery. She listened to a message on Ms Lewinsky's answerphone and concluded that the male voice declaring that "law shucks" was President Clinton's. She tried hard to sell the transfer to the Pentagon as a promotion rather than a demotion. And she told Starr that the affair probably helped Lewinsky's problems with self-esteem and self-confidence.

But you can see that the message from Kassoria's books might cause confusion in a young girl's mind. Their titles alone suggest the sort of predatory enthusiasm that American womanhood oozes as its birthright. What else was Monica doing but *Going For It!* when she hitched up her blouse to reveal her thong panties to the President?

And what else could you say about her use of a cigar except *Nice Girls Do*?

Dr Kassoria has refused to admit that Ms Lewinsky was a patient, and her lawyers have cautioned against inferring too much from her published works, saying: "Implications that can be drawn from *Nice Girls Do* are not correct." Her lawyer also refutes a quote attributed in the US publication, *Weekly Standard*, in March –

What else was Monica doing but 'Going For It!' when she hitched up her blouse to reveal her thong panties to the President? And what could you say about her use of a cigar except 'Nice Girls Do'?

again before her role in the drama was known – when she described the President as "cute" and added, "If he and I did it we'd have to have penetration. I'd insist."

Perhaps Dr Kassoria has been wrong-footed in the collision between her dual identity as practising psychologist and media sex doc. As the latter, she has certainly established herself as one of the pioneers in that field, predating even the venerable Dr Ruth Westheimer (one colleague recently said very breathlessly that, "she way preceded her"). And she has even won a prize

from the Italian government in the Eighties for her work as a sex therapist.

"Practice does make perfect, especially in sex," she wrote in an extract from one of her books, which was recently used by a company which makes vibrators. "Like any other 'activity', sex is a skill that has to be learned, practised and honed to precision. *Nice Girls Do* is a guide to achieving the 'maxi-orgasm' by not giving a stuff what anyone else thinks. Dr Kassoria recommends a programme of muscle-tightening Kegel exercises and bubble bath to discover the inner "erotic child". *Go for It!* takes a slightly different tack, dividing the world into winners who grab what they want through aggressive self-promotion and nice, non-confrontational losers.

It is easy to conclude that Ms Lewinsky may have dipped a little too readily into these pages. Dr Kassoria's lawyers would again advise caution. "She does not condone or advocate extramarital affairs," they say. "She thinks they are wrong." Ms Lewinsky and the doctor have not met since June last year. But their parting does not spell the end of the affair. The house in Holmby Hills, with its five kitchens, reflecting pool and parking for 50 cars, went on the market earlier this month for \$18.5m with reports that the couple are planning to buy a home in Italy.

Meanwhile, a New York magazine announced last week that Dr Kassoria had found a literary agent in New York. He is David Vigliano, who by coincidence – or perhaps not – also represents Monica's mother. And she is writing as prolifically as ever. There are two new books on the way – one a memoir of her training with catatonic adults, the other a self-help guide for women.

Dr Kassoria, in other words, might be said to have *Gone For It!*

The beginning of the end

Why endure a divorce after decades together? **Hester Lacey** talks to one woman who has no regrets

Last week, the former president of South Africa, FW de Klerk, was granted a divorce from his wife of 39 years. Why wait decades to end an unsatisfactory relationship? Is it possible to start again? Below, Irma Kennedy, 69, describes her own separation, which took place after 30 years of marriage.

I had been married 30 years when I separated from my husband in 1992. The reasons for splitting up after such a long time are complex. I come from a very strongly Catholic family and I married someone from a very strongly Catholic family. I grew up in an environment that was in many ways essentially happy and healthy, but I can see now that it was very rigid about behaviour, sexuality, marriage – life in general. As a little girl I was taught that marriage was a sacrament, a commitment for life, and through my adolescence and young adulthood I never questioned that.

When I married, it was in my early thirties. I was a professional woman, I'd been to

university and I was a qualified teacher and lecturer. I married this nice, simple guy and I had very strong ideals about marriage. I realised very early on that it was a disaster. I was very proud – young people often are – and I didn't want anyone to know I'd made a mistake. It may sound dramatic but I felt as though my heart had been broken and, after that, nothing mattered. We'd had a lovely daughter and I tried to conceal from her that there was any unhappiness in the relationship.

Then the feminist movement came along and I started to read new books and talk to other women, wonderful women, normal, ordinary women – most of my friends up to then had been Catholic and I'd moved in such small circles that I couldn't believe non-Catholics could be so nice. It was a slow metamorphosis for me. But I finally began to believe that I deserved better. I was intelligent, articulate. But I was so bound and hamstrung: it takes ages to move from such an entrenched social

environment, discover yourself, and work out what you as a human being could expect when you'd never thought you were entitled to much.

When I decided to leave my husband, he had said he thought we should get a smaller home. I told him that if we sold our home I wanted my own house and he could have a house of his own. He said we should go for counselling, which made me snort: I'd been dragging him there, kicking and screaming, for years. We went, but it was evident there was no hope; I sorted out the financial side and divided up the furniture. It was a pretty lonely old thing. If you decide late in life that as a human being you are loveable, you deserve happiness, and you decide to try to change things, people think you are very odd indeed. I had to exercise great courage. I found I was a person, I was unique, I had some great friends and I was entitled to some happiness. It took ages, but the freedom and liberation I've experienced are indescribable.

Do I regret not doing it earlier? I don't let myself think about that. I never say "if only". I've learned to look back and realise there were some good bits, I made good friends and that helped to keep me human. My friends counterbalanced my husband's negativity – his non-cooperation, his not caring.

After the separation in 1993, I bought a little house and a car, and I found teaching work – I have to work hard. I can't afford to get all gloomy about having no money to do this or that. I've always loved travelling. When I was married, I saved enough money to go on long trips, and I did a great deal to loosen up my self-confidence, self-knowledge and self-belief – the tight band I always had around my head went away. Since the separation, I've managed to save enough to travel all round the world. It's part of recovering from the grief at separation – any separation is always accompanied by a deep sense of loss. I'll be 70 in a couple of months, though I



Finally split: FW de Klerk and ex-wife

don't feel it. I'm hoping to keep my physical fitness for a bit longer. I don't worry about being lonely – in fact I need my solitude. I've got a student who lives in my house – initially the arrangement was a source of income but now I know her well, she's a friend and I've stayed with her family in Japan. My social life is quiet, I don't have many male friends. I would like a male companion but I think I might have to do without that.

I feel privileged and fortunate. I've had guts and courage to do what I've done – that's not being conceited, that's how it is. I'm still working very hard at life.

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Love and brothel creepers

Teddy boy shoes, especially when worn without socks, are much more to **Deborah Levy** than mere footwear; they represent beauty and truth, and the knowledge that love is fleeting

When I was seventeen and bought my first pair of brothel creepers from Shellys, I knew they would never be worn with socks. It has always been very clear to me that men and women who wear shoes without socks are destined to become my friends and lovers. These sockless people have a kind of abandon and suppleness in their body. They walk with zip. At the same time they manage to look both nonchalant and excitable. To not wear socks is to be alert, but not hearty. To not wear socks is to not pretend that love is for ever.

Five months pregnant and wearing my brothel creepers, I went to see a Peter Greenaway film called *The Baby of Mâcon*. The best moment was when a counter-tenor started to sing something that sounded like *the fluids of the body ... love passeth quickly*. These seemed such beautiful words to sum up everything that matters in life that I cried and cried until my white shirt was sopping wet with my own salty fluids.

Love does pass quickly and there is no time to waste putting on socks. To wear socks with your shoes is to have missed your date with love. If it's any consolation, people who wear socks are probably better adjusted than their sockless brothers and sisters. They are not in weather denial, they face up to things and always carry an umbrella when it rains.

They also fear sex and sensuality (particularly those who wear sandals and socks), and are terrified of revealing they are in fact libido-crazed sado-masochistic authoritarians pretending to be bird watchers and vegetarians.

The sockless are Godless. So are brothel creepers, also known as "teddy boy shoes". Walking down the street in my very first pair made me feel like I was wearing a tattoo that marked me out for a meaningful life. Not quite winkle pickers, their leopardskin tongue (V-shaped) was surrounded by two inches of thick black crepe sole. To slip my naked foot into them was to literally walk on air. My brothel creepers were beauty and truth, genius personified, never mind they were rock and pop - that was not the point. They were the metropolis, my ticket out of suburbia, my exit sign from everything women were supposed to become.

There was something in the brothel creeper design that seemed to put the

world in perspective. The combination of brothel creeper and naked ankles made me feel sexy, serious, frivolous, confident. I wore them with tight black clinging dresses and I wore them with jeans. I wore them with pencil skirts and pin-striped trousers. I was never not wearing them ever. Their pointy black toes tapped to the beat of rebellion; the shoes my mother would never have worn, the shoes my father would never have worn, in fact the shoes not many girls wore but the ones who did were always gorgeous. My narcissism was confirmed when, hungry, I found myself waiting on the platform of a station somewhere in the sleepy shires. When I heard the train was going to be 11 minutes late, I sprinted over the bridge (in my beautiful brothel creepers) to find something to eat. Everyone in the local supermarket was older and if they weren't pensioners they were young. I grabbed a sandwich and ran to the checkout till, four minutes to go before my train arrived. And there was the checkout girl in her checkout overalls staring dreamily into the white strobes on the ceiling. Three minutes to go and her till roll runs out. As she stands up to get another one, I see she is wearing brothel creepers too. Except hers are electric blue suede and have even more attitude than my own. As I run for my train I know that she too will run out of her till roll life one day, because her shoes are a sign that she has hope. Hope! After the revolution every one will have a pair.

I have bought many versions of them since, but 20 years later that first pair still lie intact on the top shelf of my shoe rack; like jazz musicians they have improved with age because they have a kind of eternal, ugly grace.

The brothel creeper spirit will be with me until the day I die. They remind me of life before I became a mother when the maternal body is mapped in fluids - tears, blood, milk, just as that counter-tenor sang. I wore them to write my novels, to teach, to almost get married in Rome and then at the last minute to run away. My beautiful brothel creepers remind me that getting older means you become the people you once mocked.

I sometimes wear socks.

From *A Second Skin: Women Write About Clothes* edited by Kirsty Dunne, published by The Women's Press Ltd on 12 November, price £7.



Big for her boots: Deborah Levy wore her brothel creepers to feel sexy, serious, frivolous, confident



Man's world Andrew Martin

IN THAT sumptuous stationers, Smythson, in New Bond Street, there are beautiful books marked "Anecdotes" so that you can list every amusing story you know from one to a hundred, thereby proving that you are the most boring and annoyingly retentive person the world has ever known.

Others are marked "Lovers" or "Blondes" or "Politically Incorrect", so that you can transcribe non-PC thoughts, which, for your average Smythson customer, I suspect, are not in short supply.

Personally I go there at this time of year for a diary, and my visits always bring on a dilemma: should I buy my usual small pocket diary or go for a big thing that would enable me to make a proper chronicle of the year's events? Price plays a part, of course. The little diary costs £20, whereas the big one I have in mind is this year retailing at £249. But then surely the investment would be worthwhile if one could reap rewards on the scale of those going to the family of Lord Wyatt of Westford?

I kept a diary intermittently as a teenager, and often feel that I should continue to do so. The other day, for example, my young son said that he wanted the word "electricity" to be written on his knee so that, if burglars came into the house at night, they wouldn't touch him (or at least they wouldn't touch his knee) for fear of getting a shock.

Now that sort of thing demands to be written down, but on the other hand if you're forever waiting with pen poised for people to say charming things, they never do. A watched pot never boils, which is why I'm sure that 90 cent of those "Anecdotes" hooks bought at Smythson are ultimately filled with games of hangman or shopping lists.

Another argument against keeping a diary is that most memorable events are, of course, had ones and the diarist has to not only endure the had event, but also to write about it with good grace. Scott of the Antarctic had no problem here. In his expedition diary of 1912 he wrote that on the whole it was "a pity" that he was dying, but expressed the hope that his and his colleagues' families could be properly looked after. Compare this to my own entry, made on 12 March 1974 in response to the appearance of a spot on my chin: "This is so typical of the way things are going for me right now..."

If I do start keeping a diary, I'll tell people that I'm doing it. Then they might be nice to me, for fear of being the subject of a devastating thumbnail sketch. (It worked for Kenneth Williams, I believe.) And I shall certainly be writing in the hope that my diaries will eventually be published with an introduction written by some suitably eminent person, beginning: "Although Andrew Martin lived a life of almost complete obscurity, his diaries cast an invaluable light on the..." Ah, but on the what, though? There's the rub.

This year, once again, I have decided that the little diary will serve.

Is Ally McBeal a Nineties heroine? Or a grotesque creation of male fantasy?

DEBATE This week sees the final episode in the current series of 'Ally McBeal'. Its heroine is a feisty, sexy, engagingly flawed heroine for our times, believes Kate Le Vann. Glenda Cooper disagrees: the series has many quirky assets and interesting characters, she argues. It's just that Ally McBeal herself is not one of them

She's everything we wish to be. That's why I like her, says Kate Le Vann - and perhaps why you hate her. Here's why I like Ally McBeal. She's smart and plucky. She believes in true love and she can't dance. And the show is the closest we've come to a primetime musical since *The Kids From Fame*. Most of my girlfriends hate her. "She's self-obsessed and whiny," they say. "Those skirts," they say.

While it's true that Ally has clocked up the single largest first person pronoun count in television history, most of these come from her endearing repetition of the first syllable of each sentence, which is only "I" about half the time. And it seems unfair that the same dress-sense that made *This Life's* Anna strident and halcyon makes Ally a subservient wimp. Even her faults don't meet conventional female-angst specifications, which is what makes Ally refreshing. She's indecisive, insecure, a little naive - nothing men would find unattractive. But then, male fantasies frequently make great women: Linda Fiorentino in *The Last Seduction*, Sharon Stone in *Basic Instinct*. When women write for women, we get Meg Ryan movies.

A recent survey showed that the only female characters in US sitcoms that British women identified with were Rebecca

from *Cheers* and *Frasier's* Roz. Rebecca, who has never been bettered, was a gorgeous mess - she may have had the body of a strong and confident woman, but she had the heart and stomach of a loser. Roz is another smart cookie who makes foolish choices. Feisty and sexy, she picks all the wrong men, who usually reach fourth base, but seldom a second date.

For women, it's all down to having the right neuroses; like Bridget Jones. Bridget struggles with calories. Score one. Ally is effortlessly skinny. Minus four. Bridget drinks and smokes too much, showing healthy disregard for her body. Score five. Ally would never smoke - this is America - and she certainly doesn't get pissed. Even on bad dates. Minus seven. And what about those bad dates? Bridget's boss treats her like crap, and her boyfriend blows hot and cold. Go to double figures. Everyone is in love with Ally, even when she doesn't know it, even when she's dithering and stuttering and being thin all the time. You do the maths. Bridget works at being irresistible to men while Ally just is, without even being aware of it.

It's not hard to see why cool women won't warm to her. Be honest, though - isn't part of the irritation just physical prejudice? Wouldn't you hate Ally less if she didn't look like even Natalie Imbruglia could kick her butt?

It's easy to like characters who share our flaws, because if they're sexy, it lets us believe maybe our hang-ups are sexy too. But with her limp hair and bad suits, the fixation with that drippy tease of an ex-boyfriend - Ally has problems worth bonding with. She may not be one of us, but she's on our side. Bridget may represent us as we are, but Ally shows us as we would be if we got everything we wished for. Still

screwing it up, but doing it in size 8 jeans.

Ally McBeal knows that being rich and thin doesn't give you the answers. By my reckoning, that makes her a step forward. "Even if I get past all my problems," she says, "I'm just going to go out and get new ones." Here's a hint, Ally: a bit of cellulite is always very popular.

Kate Le Vann is a freelance writer. Her first novel, *Trailers*, will be published by Viking in March 1999



As a series, it's great fun, says Glenda Cooper. Just get that irritating woman out of it. WAAARGH. That was my reaction when Ally McBeal admitted her age: 27. This woman is 27? If she's that screwed up now she's going to have a mid-life crisis at 29 and be through with the menopause by the time she's hit 32.

I can't help it. I just hate Ally McBeal with a pure vengeance. Not the series - I have great affection for Richard Fish, Renee, Elaine et al. I would just find it perfect if they could take the eponymous heroine out of it. A sort of *Not Ally McBeal*. Or *Ally McBeal Without That Irritating Woman*. (Look, it worked for *Jagann*).

Show me a shot of Calista Flockhart with that cute little scarf round her neck and I get a Pavlovian reaction. I feel my blood pressure rising and an in-

voluntary snarling at the back of my throat. I want Dancing Baby to stop grooving and squash her.

Over-reaction? Certainly. But the problem with Ally is that she's a plastic void at the middle of a funny series. Her skirts have more depth than her character - and they're rising to an "eye-popping 14in" (I quote) in the next series, so goodness knows where her IQ will end up.

Strip away the big eyes and the perfect haircut and there's just a tick-list of what modern women are supposed to be concerned about. Successful - tick. Single - tick. Falling apart - you betcha life. Aren't all women like that really, boys?

In fact, Ally is pure male fluffy fantasy - someone who holds down a job as a lawyer, has an expensive flat and designer clothes. And yet, Put a man on the same planet and she turns into a doc-eyed 13-year-old. Neurosis - we got it in spades.

Actually, the male fantasy element is not the main problem. It's not that I demand that heroines should all have a first class degree in Post-Feminist Assertiveness. But I don't want a heroine who whinges so much. And about absolutely everything. "Oh Ally, why are your problems so much bigger than anyone else's?" said long-suffering flatmate (and luckless

Ally sounding board) Renee in one episode. They're not. They're just so terminally boring that they seem bigger - and unsolvable. As Ally herself said: "The truth is that I probably don't want to be too happy or content because then what? The more lost you are the more you have to look forward to."

Compare her to the magnificent Renee (Date gets fresh? Kickbox him) or the wonderful Elaine (No man? Try her virtual husband CD). The only thing that makes sense is to let Ally get back with drippy Billy. Let's face it, Georgia and her new haircut deserve better than him.

The best moment in recent episodes was when the Biscuit finally lost his cool and told Ally to shut up. Yes, yes we all cheered. How about shutting up for a few episodes? Go to the corner of the room and twist with the Dancing Twins while we enjoy the other characters.

I want Richard Fish to get together with the judge. I was sorry it didn't work out for the Biscuit and his old flame. So, can't we just get rid of all those annoying his in between that have Ally in them? Do us a favour girl. Take a moment.

Glenda Cooper is the Independent's social affairs correspondent

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I am getting married in May next year and am having a major problem trying on dresses – recent trips to bridal shops have left me in despair. My bust is a size 20 and my hips are a size 22-24, but the dresses on display are size 12 and 14 so I can't try any on. I am expected to order a dress not knowing whether the style will suit. I am also in the process of losing weight which compounds the difficulty as my body shape and size will change. I feel very strongly that I should be able to choose the style of my wedding dress based on what I look like in it and not what it looks like on a hanger. Do you know of anywhere in London which specialises in stylish dresses as opposed to meringues for the larger woman?

Vivian Whitaker, London
I really think you have touched on a problem here. Why shouldn't you be able to try your wedding dress on in your size? I absolutely agree with you! Come on you manufacturers, do something about this! Shamefully, nothing in London but Blossoms Bridal (01992 442974) in Hertfordshire specialises in non-meringue dresses. It doesn't sell off-the-peg but it does have samples that you could try. It would take about three months but you would have fittings as you went along so they could adjust as you lost weight. Prices start at £350. Or there's Chapel Belles (01787 371037) which is based in Suffolk. It stocks dresses up to a size 30 and sells off-the-peg for brides who want something quickly, but usually dresses are made to order which takes about four months. Prices from £350. Or, if you wanted to wait till early spring and you wanted something that wasn't a "wedding dress" but could do as one, you could have a look at Anna Scholtz's collection in Harrods which goes up to a size 28. Its spring/summer 1999 collection goes into the store in Feb/March and prices start at £300-£500. Call 0181 964 3040 for further enquiries. Best of luck.



My friend has a delightful three-and-a-half-year-old daughter who has an enormous raft of very serious (ie life-threatening) allergies and has to dress in natural fibres. His problem is good, thick, winter coats. All the coats he finds have a polyester lining. Of course it's paramount that the lining be cotton, since this will be closest to her skin. Do you have any idea where he can find a children's coat that only uses natural fibres? We both live in London, but he would go to the ends of the earth if he knew there were shops there that sold all-cotton coats.

Claire Naylor via e-mail
I was a little unclear whether it had to be cotton or just of a natural fibre so I have given some wool alternatives too. Greenfibres (mail order: 01803 868001) makes lots of nice things in organic cotton and could do something by special order which would cost about £100. It could also sell you organic cotton (which feels like sheepskin) for around £30-£40 per metre; it could be put in as a warm lining to another cotton coat that would be too light on its own. Clothworks (mail order: 0181 299 1619) sells all-cotton clothes for under-fives and also said it could do something special in organic wool with an organic cotton lining. It would cost about £80. Finally Cocoon Coats (01389 755511) has a shop in Kensington, London; tel: 0171 221 7000. It usually makes coats for adults but it could make one for a child for between £150-£250 in cotton with a pure wool lining; it would take about four to five weeks. I do hope something here helps your little friend.



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Pink cashmere polo-neck sweater (sizes 8-16), £160, Boden, reference no: WK108PRR Mail Order/enquiries: 0181 453 1535. Prince of Wales check trousers with turn up (sizes 8-16), £215, Margaret Howell, 29 Beauchamp Place, SW3. Enquiries: 0171 584 2462.

Beige patterned top (sizes s-l), £49.99, matching cardigan (sizes s-l), £69, both Kookai, 5-7 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge, London SW3; 66 King Street, Manchester. Enquiries: 0171 937 4411. Grey wool wide leg trousers (sizes s-xl), £129, Joseph, 315 Brompton Road, London, SW3; 81 King St, Manchester. Enquiries: 0171 590 6200. Black leather shoes (sizes 3-7), £195, Ernesto Esposito for Russell & Bromley, 24-25 New Bond Street, London W1. Enquiries: 0171 629 6903.

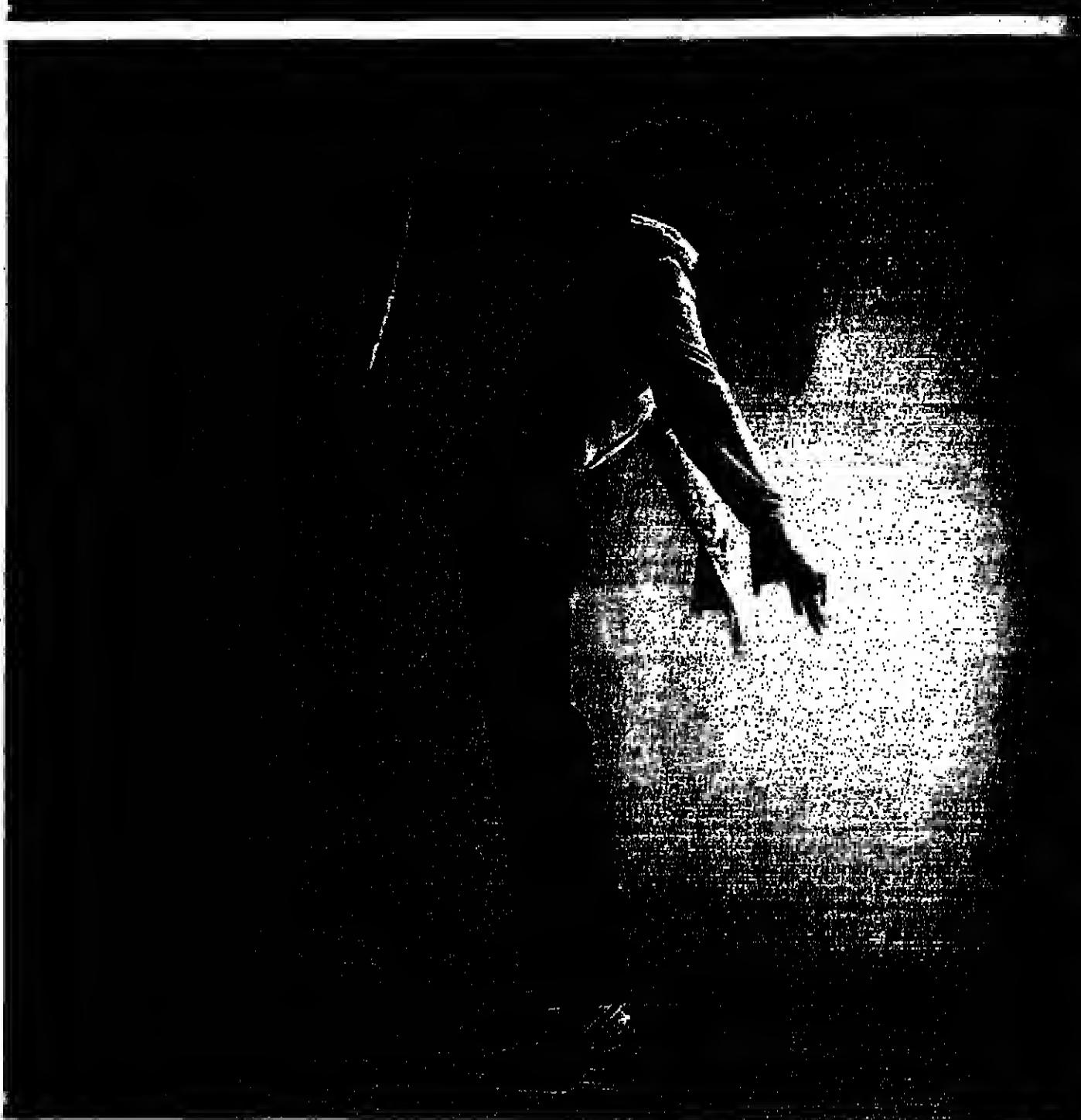
Grey top with lace trim (sizes 8-14), £80, Press & Bastyan, 11 South Molton Street, London W1; 22 Princes Square, Glasgow. Enquiries: 01622 763211. Grey wool trousers (sizes 8-14), £150, Costume National, Harvey Nichols, 67 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge, London SW3. Enquiries: 0171 235 5000. Black patent shoes (sizes 4-7), £210, Michel Perry for Pied A Terre, 31 Old Bond Street, London W1. Enquiries: 0171 629 0686.

Lilac mohair sweater (sizes 8-14), £85, Pied A Terre, 31 Old Bond St, London W1. 30-32 Queen Victoria St, Victorian Quarter, Leeds. Enquiries: 0171 629 0686. Grey wool trousers (sizes 8-16), £140, Whistles, 12 Saint Christophers Place, London W1; 9 High Street, Oxford. Enquiries: 0171 487 4484.

Pink chiffon blouse (sizes 8-14), £150, grey trousers with green check (sizes 8-14), £185, both Paul Smith Women, 40 Floral Street, London, WC2. Enquiries: 0171 379 7133. Satin sling-back shoes (sizes 4-7), £210, Michel Perry for Pied A Terre, 31 Old Bond St, London W1. Enquiries: 0171 629 0686.

Photographs by Peter Warren
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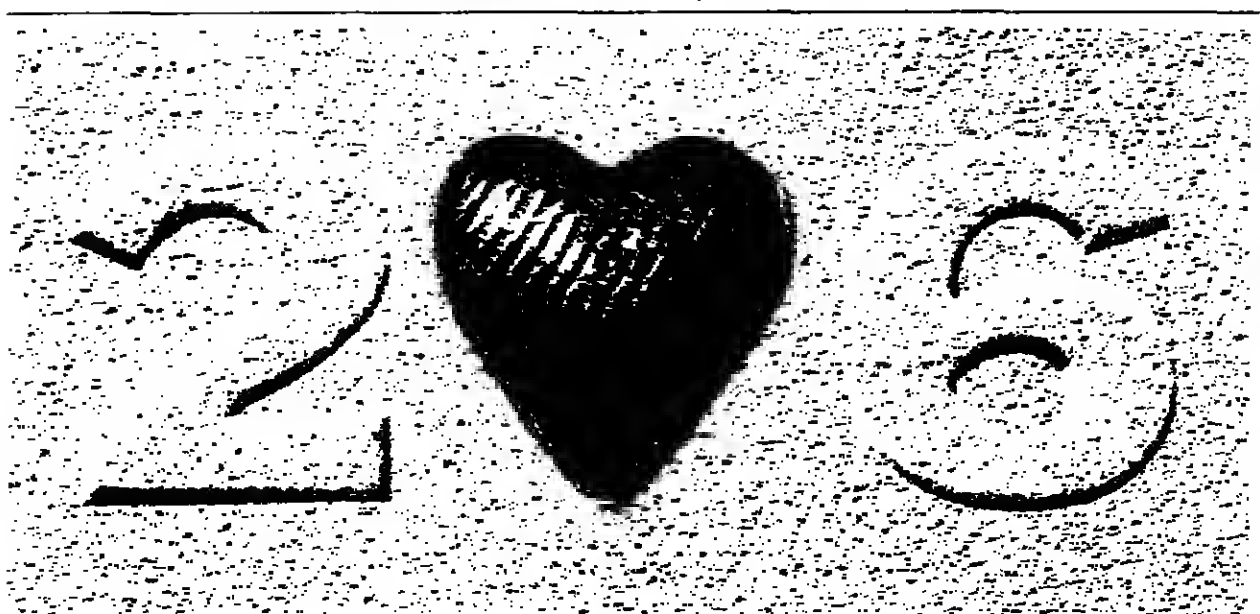
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Legs eleven

BY ANNALISA BARBIERI

For a long time I struggled with trousers, nervous of anything tailored. Thus for years I lived in leggings. Yes I know. Shameful. Me who writes about fashion every week. But trousers are so tricky aren't they? They never fit in all the places they are meant to. And so it was that the thought of trying something on that would make my legs look squat and sorry rather than the long and lean I had miraculously hoped for drew me into the fashion cul-de-sac that is leggings. But just two weeks ago I found a fabulous pair of trousers from Gap. Wool, lined (thus not itchy) and in navy or grey for £48. I bought both colours. They still don't fit exactly (too big on the waist if they fit on the hips) but I have put up on that in all but made-to-measure trousers. They are as comfortable to wear as leggings, so much smarter so I no longer look as if I have strolled in from the garden. What's the look for trousers? Who cares really – if they fit and they suit you, buy them. But if you do have a pair made for you then send in a SAE, write "dressmakers" in the left-hand corner, 50 pence worth of stamps on it, and we'll send you a copy of our dressmakers directory. For address see the top of Annie's column.



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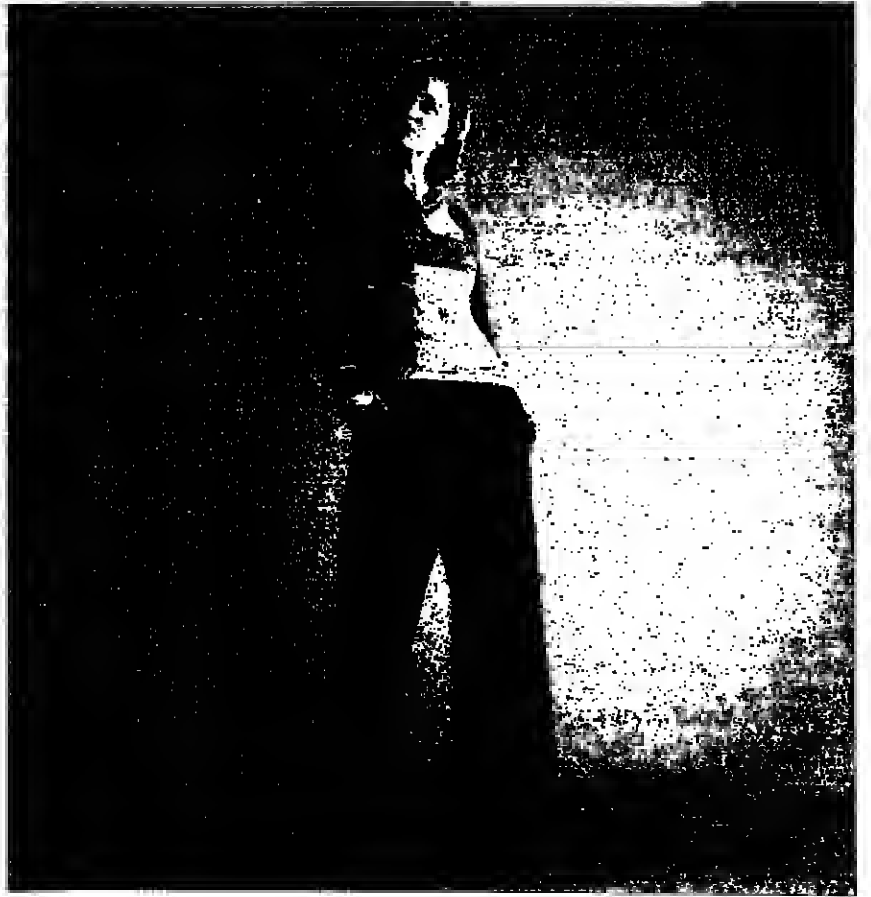
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THE STYLE POLICE

With Marks & Spencer's profits plunging, the store stands accused of losing its touch. What touch? asks James Sherwood

Saint Michael's sins

TWO OF fashion's institutions have been much-maligned this week. Linda Evangelista raised suspicions that she was pregnant during a catwalk appearance in Portugal. She was not. And Marks & Spencer, the Peggy Mitchell of the British high street, was accused of losing its touch. Profits are down 23 per cent for the first six months of 1998 and shares fell 10 per cent to hit a five-year low. M&S chairman, Sir Richard Greenbury, said, "It's a bloodbath out there," referring to UK retail rather than Oxford Street on a Saturday afternoon.

Melodrama aside, this is Style Police not NASDAQ. We can only talk about Marks & Spencer's merits as a frock shop. Is it supplying what we, the hip kitties of Britain, are demanding?

"If you are a fashion stylist or a student who has hours to spend searching for one item, then you will find it in M&S," says Lorna V, editor of *Time Out's* Sell Out section. "Mind you, you could say that about any store. I often think men who are dallying around a lot must think women have no imagination, because we all wear the same underwear." Any discussion about M&S will always come down to the nation's drawers. But the store has been promoting itself as a serious proposition for fashion. M&S was the first to employ "consultant" designers Betty Jackson, Julien Macdonald, Paul Smith and Ghost's Tanya Sarnie to

pep up the high fashion content of what was essentially middle England and middle-of-the-road clothing. Debenhams went one further by naming its guest designers Ben de Lisi, Pearce Fiorida, Jasper Conran and Maria Grachvogel. Angela Buttolph, the "Fashion Victim" on Channel 4's *She's Got to Have It*, says, "Frankly, I'd send someone to buy my underwear in M&S but wouldn't be caught dead in any other branch than Marble Arch. I'd be bulk-buying this season's 100 per cent cashmere for under £100 and elbowing Japanese tourists out of the way to make sure I got the last grey cashmere sweater. But apart from underwear and cashmere, Fashion Victim would bypass M&S as a fashion store."

Strike two against M&S is availability. This season, the mags all shot at least one M&S piece that got it right – a neat pair of pinstripe slouch pants or a grey empire line maxi dress. Now you try finding these pieces in your local branch. The M&S seasonal stockpile is so vast some of us just can't be bothered to wade through myriad items in offensive colour ways to find the one grey item left on the rail, which is inevitably a size 23. Trying to be all things to all people will inevitably disappoint. If you promise high fashion pieces to young customers and don't deliver, then you've lost another customer to Oasis or Dorothy Perkins.

The key selling point M&S always had



Well, you can still trust M&S undies

against high street rivals was quality. But even that is in question. There's a lot of variation in the make-up at M&S. In some cases it is overrated. Because the stock is so vast, you tend to find a piece you really want and then the size is unavailable. And that's a problem. Arguably, M&S has been busy with its foray into contempo-

rary interiors, which Lorna V says is excellent. Or trying to corner the gourmet pre-pack meal market, which Fashion Victim swears by. Again, this is M&S trying to be all things to all people. Maybe they need to get back to basics where fashion is concerned.

M&S prides itself on providing us with our basics. A couple of years ago, it was chic to admit you bought your basics from M&S. You'd hear hip young mums boasting about buying an extra pack of 10-12 year old white T-shirts for themselves and spending the VAT on Tequila. Now we buy our basics from Gap. Gap works because it is a US import, it is a young label in the UK and because the label is accepted along with Carhartt and Dockers as a funky label to be seen wearing. Nobody under 40 and of sound mind would buy their khakis or denims from M&S.

So is Style Police dancing on the grave of St Michael? Not a bit of it. M&S has always had the right ideas, but smaller, younger companies have always been able to copy and carry them through more quickly. M&S underwear is, was and always will be a solid gold design classic. For the big white shirt, the 100 per cent cotton T-shirt and the silk viscose card, M&S is king. But the scatter technique with "high fashion pieces" – selective stockists, short runs and nervous publicity campaigns – is not going to cut it.

Through the nose

Would you blow £25 on a designer hankie?

IS IT WORTH IT?

WHEN PERFECTLY good paper nose-wipes exist for those autumn blow-and-throw moments, why invest in a designer handkerchief? After all, these little squares of cloth are one of life's oddities, combining the worst in both hygiene and fashion. Where is the market for germ storage with a label? To justify the £25 expense of the 100 per cent cotton Hermès hankie, one would surely have to suffer a permanent obsession with lounge suits. Handy breast pockets for displaying that crisp hint of handkerchief are strangely absent on casual clothing.

Available in blue, yellow or white, the Hermès is touted as a "man's handkerchief", although at only 24 square inches of cloth, it's a disappointingly plain and compact slice of manliness. Historical dandies would despair at the lack of frills, but then this is not a hankie for gesticulation. There's just not much to flourish, should you wish to, except for perhaps the discreet, embroidered Hermès logo in the corner.

"The price of a handkerchief is determined less by design than by the skills used and the textile quality," says Martin Addelman of the Irish Linen Company, the thinking oose

blower's choice for handkerchiefs. "It's about the integrity of the cloth, and a good handkerchief will always have a hand rolled, rather than machine stitched, edge." The Hermès hankie passes the quality test with its authentically uneven stitching. However, even the gentle roll of an edge cannot make the price authentic.

For a more reasonable £12.50, the Irish Linen Company can offer you the same craftsmanship. A more user friendly and practical investment for show or blow. But the practicality of the Hermès hankie is not really the point. It's a late-20th-century nod to a 19th-century fad for showing off with a statement hankie. However, whilst 19th-century versions were radical, printed with satirical cartoons and political statements, the only statement here is disposable income versus disposable Kleenex.

If a statement is what you require, then why not plump for one from novelty hankie sellers, Magnificent Mouchirs? For a mere £4.95, you too could blow your nose on the London Underground Map, something that would probably bring immense satisfaction to many commuters. Anna McVill-James

Pigs a mule

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PEOPLE IN FASHION

She lives on a farm and takes a dim view of fashion. Annie, Real Life's sartorial agony aunt, talks to Annalisa Barbieri, the woman who knows her best

Pigs and mules

In the three years since Annie started writing her column in *Real Life*, it has grown to near cult status. She is a fashion agony aunt but people with little interest in clothes lap up her waspish style and wise asides. The point for her, though, is still her core readers, those with nagging problems in the wardrobe department.

"I love getting all those letters," she says (she gets an average 150 per week). "Sometimes I get fed up and think 'how ever am I going to find the answers this week?' and then I'll get a lovely letter and that makes all the difference."

Annie – no surname is forthcoming – lives "somewhere between the river Taw and the river Carron" with her five children and her husband of 17 years. He is a pig farmer. "We met when I was 16 and I married him a year later. He's 10 years older – that's very glamorous when you're 16." I tell her that everyone thinks she is about 50. "Yes I know," she says, "but I'm not." She is, in fact, 34.

Annie grew up in London and only moved to the country nine years ago. This is reflected in her wardrobe, which is surprisingly metropolitan. "I don't dress constantly in wellingtons. I go through stages. In May I went through a pedal pusher and mules stage and I wore them constantly, even on the farm."

"It's especially important to look good when you live on a farm, otherwise you can just neglect yourself. I would wear my 'whore mules' – four inch heels with furry cow print from Senso. Fabulous things. It took me ages to do anything but I didn't care because I felt great."

Other "stages" have included a barmoid look – "I had my cleavage on show 24 hours a day. The male teachers at my son's school kept calling me in to discuss his progress" – and a "wafting chiffon Thirties look in which I would run from room to room clutching the doorframes."

Despite her massive mailbag, Annie only answers three or four questions a week. "I don't have a databank or anything so I can't answer many

more than that," she explains. "Most of the information is in my head. I have to know who is doing what at the moment, which is difficult because I don't go to the shows. But I'll have an idea of who has done the sort of boots that 'Sally from Bristol' wants. Then it's a case of ringing round and round and round until I find an answer."

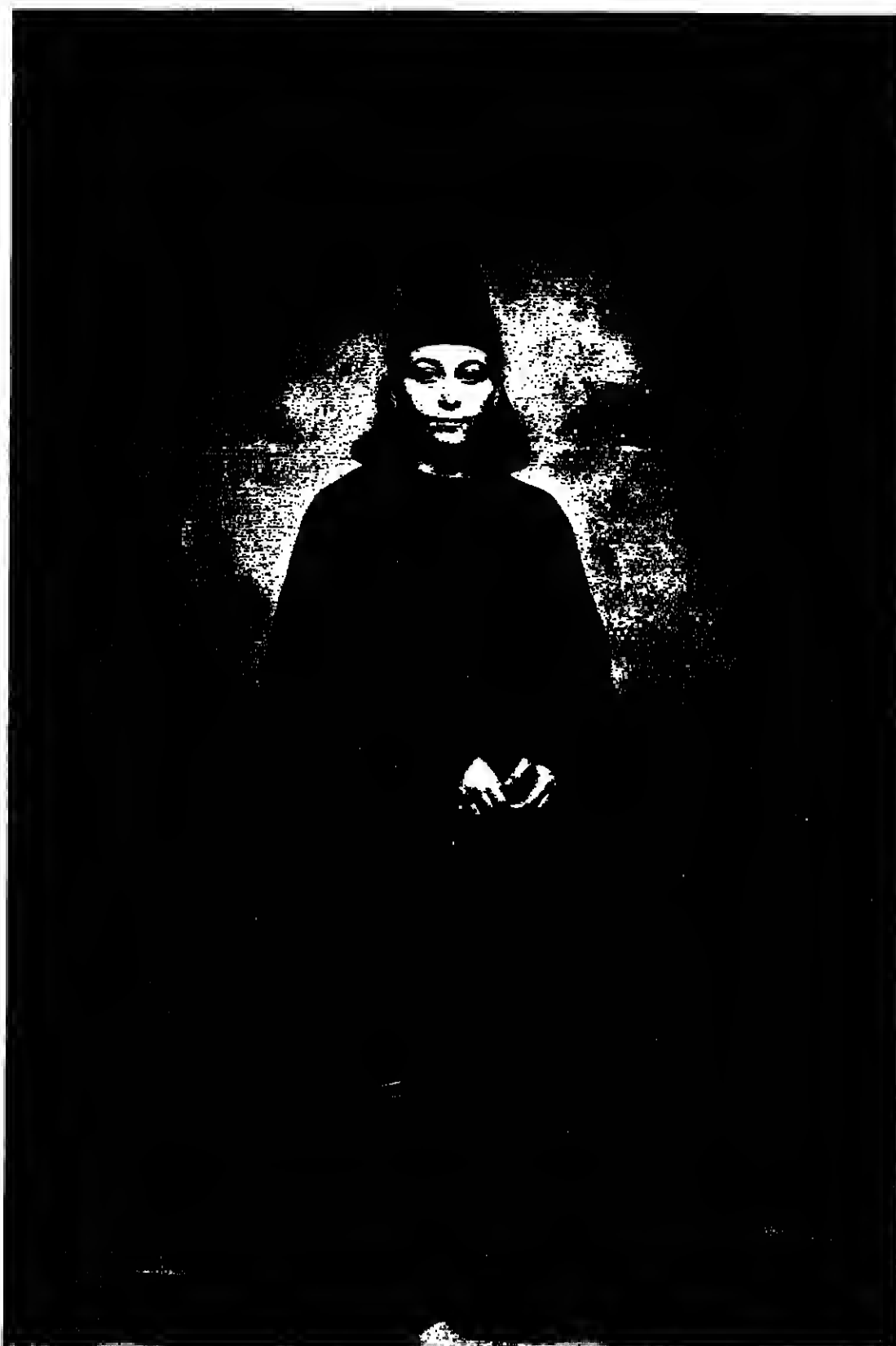
She keeps big files marked "Bible, A-D" with information sent in from readers or suppliers. For the past 18 months she has also had a research assistant, which she says is "bliss".

Annie answers questions on all matters of fashion but she has a speciality; she is an authority on bras and breasts. "I have a huge male readership and they tell me they read it for mentions of breasts and the like, which I find both funny and a little sad," she says. "The bra is the most important item of clothing in most women's wardrobes. It symbolises so much and a good bra can make you feel fantastic."

She knows just about every trick for concealing a bra strap. "Sometimes you have to just sew your bra straps into your dress to stop it showing but equally sometimes an escaped bra strap is highly sexy." Where does she buy her bras? "Marks & Spencer because it's so easy but they should make more styles in black. And the odd La Perla bra for when I'm going through a Sophia Loren period."

Does she love clothes? "Sometimes, it depends on how I'm feeling about my body. I much prefer buying stuff for the house. If I were 5ft 10in and really skinny I would probably love clothes much more. But not being so makes me able to write the column. If I were tall and skinny I'd spend my whole time showing off at cocktail parties."

One of the services Annie offers through her column are the directories, nationwide lists of dressmakers, manufacturers of big shoes, underwear etc. "When I was a child, I would read my mother's *Woman's Own* and on the problem page the agony aunt would say 'write in for my fact sheet on impotence or spots'. After doing the column for a while, it



River deep, hat high: 'It is especially important to look good when you live on a farm', she insists

became obvious that certain sartorial problems were just as pressing. If there is such a need, I ask her, why does she think no one has done a column like this before? "The amount of research needed is phenomenal and the column lives or dies on its meticulous research. You can't be woolly, you have to tailor the answer to the reader."

We take a tour of the house. There is a piano which Annie's husband plays, and a very big library – "I like having the answers." Who is her favourite author? "I'm not very

good on finishing books, not even those Penguin Classics that cost 60p. I'm reading Ted Hughes's *Birthday Letters* at the moment which is fantastic. And I'm re-reading the St Clare's series by Enid Blyton."

Last year, Annie was approached by Faber & Faber to put her column into book form. Julian Loose, Faber's editorial director, explains what attracted him: "I was first aware of Annie because (like all men) I am secretly a fascinated reader of women's fashion and problem pages and it soon dawned on me that the column was much more

than this. Not only did she deal with men's many clothing issues, but Annie was a true authority on all matters sartorial, she was genuinely witty and fun, and wise and down to earth, as only those close to pig farmers can be."

'Dear Annie, a no-nonsense guide to getting dressed' is published on 16 November by Faber & Faber, £9.99. To order your copy at a reduced price, turn to the order form on page 6. Annie makes her first public appearance on 24 November at Waterstones in Hampstead, tel: 0171 794 1098 for further details

SHOPPING WITH... TRACEY BOYD

Florence, Paris, Portobello

TRACEY BOYD imagines that most designers, like herself, hardly ever buy clothes. "I wear my own – if you're a girl it kind of makes sense, but when I do buy I choose things which are completely different from what I design." Boyd produces pretty skirts and dresses in beautiful fabrics for her own two-year-old label, Boyd, but when she's "nowhere near fashion people", rustles around in long skirts "made from tent material" which make her feel like a wigwag. "I go to Vexed Generation in Soho [3 Berwick Street, London W1; 0171 287 6224] which sells amazing streetwear. It's terrifying to get to, on the first floor down an alleyway which smells of piss – you have to walk across this horrible chicken wire bit, but inside it's fantastic and inventive."

Boyd buys accessories aplenty. She carries a velvet tote by Samantha Heiskie (0171 589 9777). "It's feminine but big enough to keep my huge Filofax in." The petite designer has teeny size two-and-a-half feet. Every season she treats herself to Manolo Blahnik shoes, "and Prada and Min Mi are good because they do a size 35. I absolutely adore shoes by the designer, Rodolphe Meandier [The Cross, 141 Portland Road, London W1; 0171 727 6760], as they fit me perfectly."

Boyd also loves buying vintage shoes (her latest are Turkish slippers, complete with curled toes and tassels) and



Boyd has a soft spot for cashmere from Portobello Market

clothes. "I scour markets and retro shops like Vent [open on Fridays and Saturdays on Ledbury Road, London W1] and there's a second-hand cashmere stall at Portobello Market, under the Westway flyover where I get floral cardigans for £25-£40. People always ask me where I buy them." Boyd also likes shopping for children's knitwear, jumpers from Gap Kids (0800 427 789) and Jigsaw Junior (0171 491 4484). "I even wear kids' socks – it's pathetic," she laughs.

Tracey likes to buy lots of stuff abroad – it makes for a more unique look as other people are less likely to have them. Florence is a favourite. "I always go to this really old-fashioned

haberdashery, called Quercoli and Lucherini [00 39 055292035]. It's got really fantastic ribbons; Swiss Alpine ribbons and sampler ribbons with cross hatches. I've got oodles of boxes from there." For bathroom products, Boyd also visits the Farmaceutica di Santa Maria Novella (16 Via Della Scala; 00 39 055216276) set in part of an old church. "When you go in, the smell's quite extraordinary. I come home with bags of fantastic herbs and all sorts of weird potions."

In Paris, the designer visits Colette (213 Rue Saint Honoré; 00 331 55353390). "Even though lots of the things there are available in London, I like the way they put them together." On a recent trip to New York,

Boyd was fascinated by Michael Anchin Glass Co (250 Elizabeth Street, NYC, 001 212 219 8253). "They had the most beautiful hand-blown glass eggcups graded in colours like lilacs and pinks – all my kind of colours. I thought it was an absolutely exquisite place." Other little objects scattered around Boyd's stylish home haven't travelled quite as far. "I go to Jody Greenwood Antiques [657 Fulham Road, London, SW3; 0171 736 6037] for things like French enamel pots, picture frames and curtain tiebacks."

Aside from ribbons, beautiful glassware and scaled-down shoes, what does Tracey Boyd shop for? "I get excited about food shops like Baker & Spice [46 Walton Street, London SW3; 0171 589 4734]. I could get extremely podgy on cheese straws from there." From a "wonderful delicatessen" on Fulham Road called Salumeria Estense (837 Fulham Road, London SW6; 0171 731 7643) Boyd buys "Italian food and bread, like focaccia." She buys organic meat from a "wonderful butcher on Wandsworth Bridge Road called Randall's [0171 736 3426]. They do fantastic home-made pies. I wish I had time to buy from individual greengrocers and butchers all the time. I hate being manipulated by supermarkets, and it makes me really livid when they switch the aisles around to confuse you."

Imogen Fox

THE HISTORY OF... NAIL VARNISH

Talon-spotting

NAIL VARNISH is instant fashion in a bottle that won't break the bank. There is evidence that as far back as 4,000 years ago manicures took place in southern Babylonia, and manicure instruments have been found Egypt's royal tombs. Body decoration, including henna as a stain for fingernails and toenails, has been practised across the world for centuries.

Nail varnish as we recognise it is a 20th-century phenomenon. In 1917, Cutex introduced the first tinted liquid nail polish, made from natural resins coloured with dyes. Technology developed and the Twenties saw nail varnishes made from plasticised nitrocellulose (a man-made film-former), but this didn't adhere well to the nail and wore poorly.

In the Thirties, Revlon created a revolutionary opaque nail enamel which used colour pigments, provided creamier coverage and disguised any blemishes on the nail bed. And, in 1939, Revlon was the first company to co-ordinate lipstick colour with nail colour.

Strongly coloured nail varnish was popularised in the Fifties by screen heroines, and, by the Sixties, pale nails were all the rage. Mary Quant introduced her first make-up range with six nail colours in 1965 and, in 1968, Boots 17 nail varnish was launched with a new non-drip formula. Mod-



Nails and lips: Revlon, 1946

ern nail varnish formulations are now mixed with synthetic resins for maximum gloss, pigment and wearing properties.

In the last few years, nail varnish has enjoyed a fashion revival. Chanel's nail sensation, Rouge Noir, was first seen on the catwalk in 1994, and became its best-selling product ever. Its cult status rocketed when it was seen on Uma Thurman's nails in *Pulp Fiction*. US brands Hard Candy and Urban Decay have been creating "alternative" colours and packaging, aimed at young people. Urban Decay's ad campaign ran with the tagline "Does Pink Make You Puke?" and Hard Candy has a line for men: Candy Man.

Nail varnish can now be glittery, fruit-scented and glow-in-the-dark and comes in all hues. Susannah Conway

ROBERT HYDE

Horoscopes

ARIES



You will face a range of difficult tasks this week, that require courage, skill and dexterity – qualities you possess in abundance. At the very least you will be called upon to handle situations others find disastrous or disturbing – and if there's a hint of danger involved you will enjoy it all the more! But resist the urge to go looking for trouble; your horoscope warns you could find more of it than you bargained for. Phone forecast: 0891 871 373

LIBRA



Duty calls and being a loyal Libran you won't want to let anybody down. But be on your guard for those who simply want to take advantage of your kindly and helpful nature. If they think they can get away with it they will dump their work load in your lap and disappear before you can change your mind. The first time it happens you must kick up a major fuss and let everyone know you will not be taken for granted. Phone forecast: 0891 871 379

TAURUS



You are entitled to your opinions but try to remember that you are only one among 6 billion and not a particularly special one at that. Sorry to burst your bubble but if you expect everyone to agree with you this week you are going to be profoundly disappointed – worse, you could find yourself arguing with someone who has a firmer grasp of the facts and won't hesitate to use them to make you look silly! Phone forecast: 0891 871 374

SCORPIO



You appear to have a talent for uncovering others' nasty little secrets – a talent you can put to positive or negative uses this week, depending on your feelings for the people involved! But remember it works both ways: if a rival or enemy uncovers something you would rather stayed hidden you will have to negotiate their silence – and if you've got nothing to bargain with you may have to deal with an embarrassing disclosure! Phone forecast: 0891 871 380

GEMINI



You may find yourself on a collision course with authority figures this week but no way should you back down if you believe that your cause is just. The fight may at times get dirty but you have nothing to fear if you stick to the facts and refuse to trade insults with those who seem to believe that be who shouts loudest wins. Your horoscope promises that it is only a matter of time before the odds turn in your favour. Phone forecast: 0891 871 375

SAGITTARIUS



Do you feel old, inadequate, worn out? Does your body tell you it's past its sell-by date? Well don't despair because once Jupiter moves in your favour on Friday your energy and enthusiasm will come flooding back. It was there all the time, of course – you had simply forgotten how to access it. Now you will go right the other way and pass yourself off as a teenager again – though the waistline's a bit of a give-away! Phone forecast: 0891 871 381

CANCER



No matter how many things you can have this week it is the one thing you cannot have that will haunt your dreams. It may be a person, it may be a possession, it may be position of power – whatever it is, you want it primarily because you know it is not allowed. This is one dream you need to wake up from: if your obsession gets the better of you there is no telling where it might lead. Phone forecast: 0891 871 376

CAPRICORN



You may be confused about your aims and ambitions but who says you have to have everything planned down to the last dot? There is too much order in your life as it is, so make this week when you seize back your freedom and make the rules as you go along. Your horoscope promises that fate will guide you in the right direction, even though you may have no idea at present what that direction might be. Phone forecast: 0891 871 382

LEO



You will be in a rebellious mood this week and anyone who tries to restrict your movements or shackle you with rules and regulations may soon wish they had targeted someone a little less bloody-minded. You want to think the best of those you live and work with but your horoscope warns that you cannot afford to take the chance – on the contrary, you should be suspicious of everything you see and hear, especially if it's your money that is being discussed! Phone forecast: 0891 871 383

AQUARIUS



There is an old saying about there being "one born every minute" and your main aim this week must be to make sure you don't join the ranks of the deceived. You want to think the best of those you live and work with but your horoscope warns that you cannot afford to take the chance – on the contrary, you should be suspicious of everything you see and hear, especially if it's your money that is being discussed! Phone forecast: 0891 871 383

VIRGO



You may be a serious person but there is nothing very serious about your horoscope this week! In fact it is so light and cheery that even if you have major problems they won't get you down at all. If a relationship has been heading south of late this is the perfect time to patch things up. Whatever your differences a little bit of humour will bring you back together – and you'll stay together if you laugh more often. Phone forecast: 0891 871 378

PISCES



You have plenty to say and nothing to hide and with a combination like that you should go far, though not everyone will approve of your crusading attitude. In fact, your horoscope warns that someone quite close is hoping and praying that your halo will slip so they can tighten it around your neck! You may be a saint among sinners but you've got human weaknesses like all the rest. Don't let your enemies exploit them. Phone forecast: 0891 871 384

STILL WORKING

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WOMEN SEEKING MEN

FRIEND AND SOUL MATE?
Friendly, attractive, 26, 5'7",
graduate, slim, enjoys cinema,
the arts, travelling and
socialising. seeks man, 25-35,
similar interests, GSOH,
handsome, genuine and kind,
for friendship, possible relationship.
London. 223230

MISSING YOU
Loving, intelligent, tall
woman, enjoys travel, arts,
golfing, seeks lively male,
50s, to curl up with. Yorkshire.
223020

LUST FOR LIFE
Attractive, thoughtful female
arts professional, 40s, independent
and adventurous,
enjoys music, travel, cinema,
golfing, seeks man, with wit,
wisdom, spirit, for friendship,
possible relationship. Bristol area.
223024

SUN WEST
LEICESTERSHIRE
Intelligent, attractive, 30s,
social smoker, likes a drink,
wakes, reading, art, bathing
(even a chanel), self-confident,
sincere, slim, own hair,
teeth, good teacher, no
talents, call me. You?
223026

WILTSHIRE MALE SOUGHT
Spirited lady, 60s, day-
time/nighttime, attractive, young-
at-heart, medium build, lov-
ing, kind, enjoys the sea,
country walks, dancing, and
seeks gentleman, similar
interests and qualities. West
Sussex based, but prepared
to move. 223227

GIRL
Attractive, 25, 5',
seeks good man, for fun,
friendship, possible relationship.
London. 223228

FROM OUT OF NOWHERE
Slim, pretty, professional
female, 41, into opera,
channel 4 comedy, dancing,
wishes by the sea. Norfolk
weekends, good wine, seeks
attractive, interesting male,
30-50, for relationship, possible
friendship. London. 223149

ARE YOU THERE?
Lady, more down front than
Joanna Lumley, but not
averse to the odd glass of
Bolly, seeks male, 38-48,
to share life and love with.
Herts/London. 223220

MAKE OUR MILLENNIUM
Two tall, happy, well-educated,
attractive, professional, inde-
pendent women, seek two
similar men, 35-48. Winks
need not apply. SW based.
223232

ATTRACTIVE AND CLASSY
Very attractive, slim, dark-
haired female, 48, 5'7", inter-
esting and intelligent, enjoys
good food, wine and male
company, seeks professional
male, 40-55, who's strong but
gentle. 223196

FEMININE EXECUTIVE
Young, stylish female, 40s,
seeks gent, 45-52, (executive/
professional/graduate),
for relationship of great impor-
tance. London. 223219

GLAMOUR GIRL
Sincere, warm-hearted, reliable,
laid-back, professional,
youthful female, slim build,
GSOH, seeks kind, sensi-
tive, affluent, refined profes-
sional male, 30s-40s, for
long-term relationship.
223210

WEST MIDLANDS
Professional woman, slim,
GSOH, loves life, but
needs to escape to the hills
for sanity, seeks attractive,
intelligent male, 35-45, for
relationship. 223210

WANTED:
A friend with potential, wit,
bravery, enthusiasm, tolerance
and a sense of the ridiculous;
solvent with a passion for life.
223212

MISSING YOU
Loving, intelligent, tall
woman, enjoys travel, arts,
golfing, seeks lively male,
50s, to curl up with. Yorkshire.
223020

HOLDING HANDS
Attractive, 47, 5'7",
Polish background, caring,
lovely, classical, dancing,
dining out, open,
seeks mature, educated,
country, similar age. London.
223185

TOP OF THE WORLD
Single-mother, intelligent,
intuitive female, 41, likes
walking, climbing, seeks
intelligent man in woolly sweater
and walking boots. 223231

ATTRACTIVE & ADVENTUROUS
Tall Grace Kelly, 50 (yet 18),
artist, photographer and enter-
preneur, with special talents
seeks tall, aware, cuddly
special with Barn. Based
in Dorset. 223205

WORTHY WOMAN WANTS WOOER

Attractive, Nottingham-based
female, seeks with male, any
area, for friendship, possible
relationship. 223235

JOIE DE VIVRE
Feminine, leading French fem-
ale, young 40, loves social-
ising, music, travel, comedy,
seeks a sensitive, lively, pos-
sible relationship. 223231

LONDON BASED
Slim, professional, black fem-
ale, young-looking 40s, with
wonderful sense of humour,
at the arts, seeks like-
minded male, 50s, N/S, hope-
fully for long-term relation-
ship. 223207

Any Queries?
Email: advice@voicepersonals.co.uk
or call 0800 216 318

SHARE MY LIFE
Attractive, honest, adaptable,
well-built, black female, 5'6",
GSOH, likes reading, travel-
ling, countryside, seeks car-
ing, intelligent, loves music,
white male, 45-54, for
friendship, possible relation-
ship. 223207

STILL VIBRANT
Female, London born and
bred, 53, Helen Mirren look-
alike, previous career in music
industry (management),
now an aspiring writer, seeks
tall, slim, handsome male, 47-
55, with a GSOH and person-
ality. 223225

PROFESSIONAL
Muscian, who's a great cook,
seeks like-minded male, to
enjoy the pleasures of life
with a GSOH. 223225

INTERESTING LADY
Attractive, intelligent lady, 33,
likes music, seeks similar
gent, for friendship. 223229

A CONTRADICTION
Confused, independent, con-
fident and thoughtful, night-
time socialiser, seeks a man
like all the good things,
seeks intelligent, solvent
male, 30-38, GSOH, who like
dogs, dancing, discussion
and is together enough not to
need counselling. 223208

CUDLY AND SWEET
Solvent woman, 36, GSOH,
seeks similar intelligent, pro-
fessional man, who likes
socialising and is looking for
someone to share life's fun
with. Looks unimportant only
chickeny couple. (I don't like)
223278

**SEEKING THE
DEFINITIVE MALE**
Confident, generous, posi-
tive, balanced, bright and
excitingly beautiful 30-some-
thing, with open mind, like-
able, not desperate for rela-
tionship, has children but no bag-
gage, a cut above. Searching
for her complement. London
M25. 223257

GROOVY CHICK
Attractive, tall, slim & sporty,
blonde female, graduate, 40s,
with a GSOH, seeking a tall
male, for dancing, cinema, live
theatre, laughter etc. 223258

AVAILABLE NOW
Wacky, wild, professional,
London based, 30s, into
travelling, romantic nights,
seeks lady, 35, to share
these passions. Nationality
unimportant. 223256

LOVING CHRISTIAN GUY
Tall, single, professional, black
male, administrative officer,
medium build, 35, unat-
tracted, honest, caring, loving,
with varied interests, seeks
similar African/Caribbean
female, 28s, for permanent
relationship. Birmingham and
Manchester. 223229

WANTED: SCIENTIST
Indian born engineer, 51, 5'7",
solvent, articulate, enjoys
music, theatre, travel, classical
music, wildlife photography,
seeks lady, 47-57, for starting
to ease up from 50 hour
week. 223215

LOOKING FOR YOU
Tall, blonde, slim, fit, bright,
cosmopolitan woman, 30s,
seeks sensitive male, who
feels that life is for living,
fun and sharing. London area.
223234

ATTRACTIVE AND LOVING
Slim London female, 40s,
seeks sensitive male, who
feels that life is for living,
fun and sharing. London area.
223234

STRANDER IN SUFFOLK
Intelligent, creative American
female graduate, 47, not slim,
real individual, good person,
seeks similar, for friendship,
romance and more. 223261

TOUCH OF CLASS
Vivacious, glamorous, attrac-
tive, blonde female, early 50s,
romantic at heart, enjoys arts,
music, theatre, travel, seeks
similar, professional, intelli-
gent, like-minded male, 45-
55, GSOH. NW England.
223245

FOR A SOUL MATE
Female, 40s, loves travel,
music, photography, food,
wine, walks, cats, Greece,
France, dancing, are you
simply? Please call. West Yorks.
223238

BLACK FEMALE

Attractive, Nottingham-based
female, seeks with male, any
area, for friendship, possible
relationship. 223235

JOIE DE VIVRE
Feminine, leading French fem-
ale, young 40, loves social-
ising, music, travel, comedy,
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sible relationship. 223231

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Slim, professional, black fem-
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Female, 40s, loves travel,
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wine, walks, cats, Greece,
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simply? Please call. West Yorks.
223238



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Tall, outgoing male, 26, seeks
intelligent, soul mate, for
friendship, possible relation-
ship. Cambridge. 223216

**ONCE IN
A LIFETIME OFFER**
Attractive, slim, athletic, cre-
ative, sensitive, hopeless
romantic guy, 30, 5'10", hairy
conventional, loves moun-
tains, live music, not perfect,
but honest, seeks slim, attrac-
tive lady 23-30, for fun and
romance. London. 223265

ATTRACTION
Dark-haired, slim, sporty guy,
25, seeks female, for fun,
champanne, chocolate, friends-
hip. London. 223263

BLUE EYES
Bernard, bright, Peter
Dinklage, 30s, into
travelling, romantic nights,
seeks lady, 35, to share
these passions. Nationality
unimportant. 223256

AMERICAN DREAM
New to England, USA,
Doctor, 30, athletic build,
enjoys dining out, theatre,
dancing, seeks genuine, hon-
est, down-to-earth, like-mind-
ed, attractive, slim, smart,
professional female, 20-30,
for friendship and a rela-
tionship. 223214

ONE FINE DAY
Happy, warm, attractive, pro-
fessional single dad, 40s, no
kids, happy, seeks a lady, 30s,
for friendship and a rela-
tionship. 223214

LOOKING FOR YOU
Happy, generous guy, 42, no
kids, happy, seeks a lady, 30s,
for friendship and a rela-
tionship. 223214

INCURABLE ROMANTIC
Well-built, professional, out-
going male, 44, N/S, seeks
female, 30-45, for long-term
relationship, who enjoys
countryside, National Trust,
arts and travel. 223215

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call Freephone 0800 216 318 and
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and headline. Then you'll receive a voice
mail box number and PIN number with
instructions on recording your personal
voice greeting and listening to responses.

Both the advert and the call to place the
ad are free, however advertisers are
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50p per minute for message retrieval.

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RELIANTLY SINGLE
Tall male, early 30s, N/S,
honest, caring, seeks a lady
like him, for friendship, pos-
sible relationship. London.
223263

MUSIC JOURNALIST
Male, 30s, N/S, into music,
reading, travel, love conver-
sation, good listener, seeks
similar female, for friendship,
possible relationship. 223262

BEAUTIFUL
Male, 30s, N/S, into London,
music, cinema, reading and
puts, seeks interesting
female, 20-30, for possible
long-term relationship. 223265

**NORTHERN SOUL
IN LONDON**
Sporty, black, athletic and
attractive male, 29, 5'11",
seeks caring, honest and
faithful, down-to-earth, like-
minded, single lady, up to 36,
South London based. 223238

IT COULD BE YOU
Two young guys, one Asian,
one African, 30s, looking for
two ladies, age/ethnicity unimpor-
tant, for fun, friendship, pos-
sible relationship. 223211

SAVE ME
From the loneliness London
often offers. Professional
male, 31, with GSOH, adven-
turous, enjoys travel, out-
doors, would like to meet a
similar female, for fun and
friendship. 223234

TRY ME
Good-looking male, 27, seeks
lady, 20-30, for friendship,
for nights out and having fun.
223214

WESTERN ISLES
Loving male, early 40s, 6'
6", olive, tall, friendly, cy-
cling, walks, keep-fit, seeks at-
tractive lady, 25-37, 223242

LET'S GO
Gentleman, 46, seeks travel
companion and more, to
explore the world and back-
packing. 223217

SUPERGUY
In wheelchair
Slim, tall and handsome male,
55, jobless, disabled, people
friendly, enjoys com-
pany, reading, music, radio and
is among other things, seeks
female, for fun, friendship,
maybe more. 223035

NORTH SOUTH
Athletic, attractive, kind and
caring, black male, 28, 5'11",
seeks athletic, attractive lady,
for friendship, possible more.
223068

MAKING LAUGH
Tall, slim, athletic, well-travelled
male, with Oxford SOH, seeks
slim, tall, Oxford European
female, who enjoys a good
adventure and willing to
share life's little surprises in
Dorchester. 223212

CREATIVE MUSICALIAN
Age 41, loves beautiful
places and fun, would like to
meet a younger female friend,
for friendship, possible rela-
tionship. 223222

IRISH MALE
Tall, slim, athletic, non-
smoker, 42, GSOH,
slim build, short beard, thin on
top, socialist, likes reading,
history, yoga, gardening,
countryside, museums, tradi-
tional Irish music, seeks
female, 28-35, 223201

SHALISBURY
Handsome, tall male, 48, with
varied interests, seeks pretty
woman, for relationship.
223224

BIRMINGHAM
Sensative, romantic, profes-
sional male, young 47, 5'7",
N/S, likes music, singing, ten-
nis, badminton, cats, reading,
walking in the rain, generally
having fun, seeking a like-
minded, professional female,
30s, to share experiences,
thoughts and adventures.
223237

ADAM AND EVE
Caring white male, 40, likes
seeing out, cinema, seeking a
professional black female,
30s, long/curly build, for
fun and romance. 223212

EXCEPTIONALLY
Handsome
Professional male graduate,
30, 6'1", seeks lady, 18-35,
to rediscover the finer things in
life. Canterbury. 223208

TRUE ROMANCE
Male, 24, 5'7", dark-haired,
likes nights in, quiet drink,
movies, dancing, seeks a
special white female, 20-35,
to spend quality time with.
223237

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DESIGNS ON YOU
Tall, slim, very fit, stylish and
outgoing, young, athletic
and dynamic distinguished archi-
tect, 51, seeks beautiful, tall,
slim, honest, attractive female,
vegetarian/vegan, young
enough to bear son and heir.
223225

SPECIAL WOMAN WANTED
Very good-looking, fit profes-
sional male, 34, 5'9", dark
hairs, very many things,
including an, nights in/out,
speaking French, gym, seeks
slim, honest, attractive female,
for long-term relationship.
London. 223202

NEW TO BRISTOL
Easygoing male, seeks
adventurous, lively female,
GSOH, good personality, for
friendship and romance. 223268

TWO'S COMPANY
Fun-loving, very caring male,
40, 6', curly dark hair, likes
golf, tennis, tennis, cycling,
walking and keep-fit, seeks
attractive lady, 26-37, for
friendship and laughter. All
 replies answered. 223270

INDEPENDENT
Romantic, educated female,
42, smoker, enjoys music, cin-
ema, pubs etc, seeks warm,
witty male, for close relation-
ship. Derby area. 223265

HOW YA DOIN'?
Why, black male, 29, 6'1",
muscular build, competitive
athlete, likes weight training,
good conversation, seeks
female, any nationality, warm
personality, for long-term
relationship. 223273

IT HAD TO BE YOU
Intelligent, soul mate, for
friendship, possible relation-
ship. London. 223271

BLUE-EYED
Professional
Downbeat, attractive, very
outgoing male, 31, 6', with a
good sense of style, average
build, varied interests, seek-
ing a slim, attractive, profes-
sional female, 25-35, who
knows what she wants and is
fairly confident and outgoing.
223218

AND CARRYING
Vegetarian, gentle, black-
haired male, 45, suffers of mild
N/S, still riding own bike,
likes driving, clubbing, seeks
female, for friendship, pos-
sible relationship. London
based. 223203

BORN-AGAIN BIKER
Male, 43, career, interests:
motorcycling, live-watching,
live-watching, reading, writ-
ing, talking, listening, seeks
female companion, 38-50,
GSOH, with a sense of ad-
venture. NW London. 223262

LARGE LOVE
Large, affectionate male, 47,
likes animals, seeks lady
woman, 18-30, smoker, for
serious relationship. 223217

EDMUNDS BASED
Slim, 40, seeks lady, profes-
sional female, 60, seeking a
special female, to share his
love, his life, his dreams and his
hopes. 223233

SALISBURY
Handsome, tall male, 48, with
varied interests, seeks pretty
woman, for relationship.
223224

BIRMINGHAM
Sensative, romantic, profes-

What a come-down

Could random drug testing cost you your job? Tobias Jones investigates

THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS

Wayne Hemingway



Wayne Hemingway is the founder of Red or Dead and a fashion expert on 'The Big Breakfast'. He has recently documented his rags-to-riches story in the book, 'The Good, The Bad, The Ugly - Red or Dead', out this month. "I started out in 1981 with a view to either being a pop star or making money out of clubs. I came to London to go to university, and met my wife, Germaine. We didn't have any money, so we emptied out our wardrobes which were full of second-hand clothes.

"We thought we could make money out of fashion and that started Red or Dead. From then on we were always going to jumble sales, finding old clothes, repairing them and selling them at Camden Market, in London. Within a few months we'd opened a stall in London's Kensington Market.

"I then went to work for EMI Records, and Germaine spent all day in the Market. One day, Macy's from New York ordered 200 items. I packed in my job straight away. We carried on selling second-hand clothing and eventually had 16 stores.

"In the early days the amount of hours we put in was unbelievable. People think it's all about parties, glamour and London Fashion Week, but it's very hard work.

"From day one I never felt any fear of interviews. I'm very clear on my attitudes to fashion and style and I'm not fazed by TV cameras, which is why I ended up on *The Big Breakfast*.

Lucy Williams

IF YOU ARE one of the millions of Britons who take Ecstasy on a Saturday night, or have the odd line of cocaine, or even just indulge in the occasional joint, you might be about to break into a toxic sweat: a report by the Forensic Science Service (FSS) published early last week highlighted that 1 million employees in this country now have to undergo testing for illegal drug use. And following the Government's Our Healthier Nation initiative, that number - and the number facing disciplinary action or dismissal - is likely to increase.

The FSS, an "executive agency" of the Home Office, found that an average of one in 10 employees tested positive for illegal drugs. Perhaps surprisingly, drug use was found to be equally common at all levels, from the shop floor to the boardroom, and across all age groups. It called for testing to be extended, so is it time to get scared? If you're reading this through a haze of last night and it wasn't all about alcohol, could you roll up at work tomorrow, get tested and promptly fired?

The answer is probably not, or at least not yet. Drug-testing in this country is still largely "targeted" at particular employees: you are much more likely to be tested regularly and rigorously if you work in particular fields, such as transport, medicine, heavy industry, the armed forces and sport: professions where there is a clear need for practitioners to be squeaky clean.

There are some basic business reasons why other companies may be reluctant to introduce testing programmes. Morale can be poisoned by an atmosphere of suspicion, and, besides, testing is expensive. Breathing costs £10, but testing for drugs, where samples have to be sent away to laboratories, and repeated if positive, can often come out at almost £100. London Transport suggests that the annual bill for its testing programme runs to six figures. Also, many companies will be aware that drugs testing will force them to confront what on earth they are going to do with the perhaps 15 per cent of their workforce who test positive.

Very few companies actually have a written policy on drugs, so whilst an employee may be involved in illegal activity, it might not contravene company rules. A report by the Institute of Personnel and Development shows that, whilst 90 per cent of companies have a policy on smoking, and 63 per cent a policy on alcohol, very few have formulated opinions on drug use. Users, and especially casual users, inhabit a grey area in most companies. Any new formulation of drugs policy by your company is clearly a first step towards testing.

Even where testing has been adopted as company policy, there are different types with different levels of risk for the casual user: pre-employment; random; "post-incident" and "with cause" - where the management single out those whose work they suspect, for whatever reason, is impaired by drug-use.

If you test positive, not all companies will automatically fire you, although it's unlikely to help your promotion prospects. The TUC suggests that the consequences of producing an impure urine sample (tests can also be carried out on blood, sweat and hair samples) depend on many things: the company's stated drugs policy, whether that policy is outlined in your contract, whether the test was conducted under duress, and of course the type and quantity of the drug involved. Many companies offer counselling.

But be in no doubt: a positive drugs test,



High fliers: more and more firms are cracking down on drug use. But even casual users can test positive on Monday morning

even for "soft" drugs, can severely mark your card. Mark, 42, was in the Welsh Guards when he tested positive for cannabis. "Being in the forces marks you out from your peers in so many ways, I didn't want to make any more compromises on my lifestyle when on leave. I was away for two weeks and had maybe a couple of smokes. I was tested on my return, failed, and was discharged. That's a stigma that all future employers are aware of, and some

I was away for two weeks and had maybe a couple of smokes. I was tested on my return, failed and was discharged. That's a stigma

obviously assume I'm narcotics-crazed."

Mark's story is repeated every week in the banking sector, an area increasingly keen to test for drugs, particularly if there's an American parent company.

The International Petroleum Exchange in the city of London has recently introduced a policy of testing. The dates of testing are determined by the chief executive and the private security firm employed to carry them out.

Sniffer dogs appear - unannounced - at the entrance, and a random selection of people will be asked to produce their identity cards and a sweat swab. The company, which employs about 110 people, gave a statement of intent to employees in a letter, and says the policy is "purely to improve performance". The company offers those testing positive "rehabilitation on a confidential basis", although dismissal is an option.

All of which points to an atmosphere of increasing narcotic puritanism already well-known to Americans, where the process is fraught with difficulties. There, drug-testing has become a multi-million dollar industry (worth some \$350m at the last count), and single companies like SmithKline Beecham test up to 5 million people a year. But the result is not falling levels of drug-use - failure rates have held steady at between 5 and 10 per cent - but increasingly sophisticated attempts at evasion: the Internet and chemists offer all sorts of remedies to avoid detection. There is - as in prison and rehab - a trade in "clean" urine, and you can buy over-the-counter drinks to mask particular substances.

There is already opposition to blanket testing here. Mike Goodman of Release, a charity which provides information about drug use, says drug testing "is becoming the witch-hunt, the Salem, of the 20th century. We are very concerned about testing. It is a fairly sinister form of lifestyle screening that has little to do with an individual's ability to do the job. It is

a degrading and inhumane process. If there is any role for testing it should be on job skills, reaction times, cognitive ability and so on. Other problems - alcohol, psychiatric, marital - are being missed while we're spending millions snooping around people's private lives."

Alcohol, for example, accounts for almost 15 million lost working days, and costs industry three times as much as drugs (some £2.4m per annum). Alcohol will be out of the blood-

'Drugs testing is becoming a witch-hunt. Other problems are being missed while we're spending millions snooping around people's private lives'

stream within 24 hours. Ecstasy and amphetamines within 48, and cocaine and opiates within 72 (canny employers tend to test on Monday mornings). But cannabis, depending as with all drugs upon the purity, strength, quantity, and the user's body weight, can stay in the body for up to 90 days. For that reason, alcohol and hard drugs rarely show up as much as cannabis, a drug more widely used and socially accepted than the others, and one

whose effects wear off much more quickly than its trace.

The correlation between drug use and incompetence at work has also been questioned. The FSS says that drug use leads to "impaired judgement, lack of concentration and unpredictable behaviour... increased absenteeism, more accidents, lower productivity and resulting damage to profit and corporate image". But Anna Bradley, executive director of the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence, has a different opinion. "In most forms of work it [drug use] only becomes a problem for the employer when it has become a problem for the employee. The question that most employers need to ask themselves is not 'who is using drugs or alcohol?' but 'who has a problem?'"

Another concern is that in this country, there is as yet no regulation of the "medical services" which offer to screen employees, and unions suspect there are more than a few cowboy operations, unwittingly toying with people's careers. The selection process for candidates in random tests, the custody of samples, and the notification of testing times - none of these are subject to control. Oonagh Ryden, policy adviser to the IPD, agrees that "it is a worry that drug-testing agencies are unregulated, and that there are no codes of operation."

The bottom line remains that incompetence is of much more concern to employers than drug use; you're more likely to be runkled for bad work than bad habits.

INDISPENSABLE ADVICE FROM REAL LIFE'S AGONY AUNT AND UNCLE

What's your problem?

The Life Doctor
Eleanor Bailey



WHAT DO you think of your body? Don't tell me, you'd like to be 8lbs lighter

There is no longer any such thing as "anorexia" and "normal people". We are all, to some extent or another, sucked into body anxiety. "It used to be thought that either you had an eating disorder or you didn't," says Dianne Jade, principal at the National Centre for Eating Disorders. "But now we know that it's a continuum. Nine out of 10 people have dissatisfaction with their bodies."

Otherwise sensible, intelligent people who are outraged by a 15-minute delay of a train are prepared to waste hours dwelling on their perceived imperfections. Only this week I was having a competition with a friend (male) to see who had the most stomach humber.

"Mine's bigger," I said squeezing the flesh between my fingers. "No mine's bigger," he said, yanking his. "Well if we were measuring thighs as well, I'd be far fatter," I said. "You're lucky," he said. "I wish I had chunkier thighs, it would make my stomach look smaller." By day this friend is a responsible 34-year-old consultant, working with multi-million pound businesses.

Scientific estimates say that people over-estimate their own size in relation to others by at least 10 per cent. Less scientific, a health editor mate of mine reckons that every normal-weight person would like to be 8lbs lighter; never more, never less. I scoffed until I thought of myself: 9st 1lb in my dreams I am a far more glamorous eight and a half. It's true, 8lbs lighter and life would be perfect.

Of course, this is the kind of thinking we should have left behind at 14. It is one of the disadvantages of our generation's extended youth. As well as retaining an irresponsible, hedonistic lifestyle well into what used to be called middle age, we are also retaining that adolescent preoccupation with how we look.

"It is a kind of neurotic perfectionism," says Dr Pat Hartley, eating disorders specialist in the Department of Psychiatry at Manchester University. "We are never satisfied with what we achieve, so if we reach our goals, we move the goal posts." In other words, even if you lose that 8lbs there will be something else wrong when you get there.

It is possible to break out of this boring cycle but you have to do it yourself. "Five-year

programmes were conducted in Canada and Norway, going into schools and trying to inform and educate pupils into healthier attitudes to size," says Dianne Jade. "The results were very poor. The powerful messages about weight are almost impossible to override on a collective level. But the evidence is that you can do something on a personal level."

The points below may convince you that losing those 8lbs will not make life better - but then you have to face up to all the other problems that you were putting off until you were a size 10. Yikes.

1. Practical
 - i) Always have three proper meals a day. Missing a meal encourages the body to feel deprived and the mind to obsess over food.
 - ii) Don't go on a diet; it's unhealthy.
 - iii) Take exercise. Exercise boosts endorphin levels which encourages you to feel good about your body.
 - iv) Don't cut out fat, cut out the crap.
2. Psychological
 - i) Look at your positive achievements on a daily basis. Every time you catch yourself with the words "thighs" in your head, force yourself to reflect on something positive.
 - ii) Confront your fear. "For example," says Dianne Jade, "we might get a client who will never tuck their jumper into their trousers to do so." Wear tight clothes on fat days and see if anyone else notices.
 - iii) In one final act of self-obsession, write a history of your fluctuating weight and attitudes to weight. Realise how boring it is and then throw it away. This is very cathartic.

SAVE ME FROM DIY

We've just moved to a large property that needs a lot of work. The trouble is my husband has suddenly taken it into his head that he can do it all, yet he has no experience of electrics, plumbing, plastering or the most basic decorating (he once put some curtain rails up). I think he is bonkers. Am I right? Tracey, Solihull

He says: I wonder what profession your husband is in. Something deskbound, perhaps, that involves much mental effort but never honest physical exhaustion? Something that involves a strict pattern but never the opportunity to be creative? So many 20th-century workers are stuck in this rut. Working with one's hands and muscles are very much bound up with traditional notions of masculinity. Creativity is vital to fulfilment and working on the home satisfies both these criteria. Don't stamp on your husband's natural desires. Let him pit himself, bone and sinew, against raw elemental brick! Let him run riot with rich colours and challenging textures! In short, let him be a MAN!

She says:

Scotch this madness at once. If you allow him to persist, he will disappear for hours into some dreary DIY emporium, and return in triumph with hundreds of pounds' worth of equipment and materials, much of it unsuitable. He will attack the first task with enthusiasm, run into a problem or run out of time, then retreat into a sulk. If he completes anything (a big if) the best you can hope for is that it will be kind-of-functional and look home-made. Trying to discourage him on the grounds he is incompetent will, however, make him more determined. Be subtle. Burst into floods of hysterical tears and sob that if he takes on all this work, you will not see him for years because all his time will be taken up stripping and grouting. This may be enough. Failing that, use one of the following desperate measures: book yourself into a hotel for the duration/flee to your parents/divorce him.

She says: For the first couple of weeks it was great - it was a real adventure tapping into someone else's world - but I've got a life with friends whom I like spending time with and nights out on my own. Now the heady hi's over I want to see less of him. But it's difficult - I feel as if I snatch a few hours on my own and he's back again. Help! Chloe, Clapham

He says: What an odd phrase to describe exploring the first phase of a new relationship: "a real adventure tapping into someone else's world". This seems an alarmingly clinical way of looking at what should be a very special time. Do you have difficulties forming lasting relationships? Wanting to stifle your boyfriend's enthusiasm for your company is neither normal nor kind. I suggest you work through your commitment-phobia with a qualified therapist.

She says: There is something uncomfortably adolescent about wanting to spend every waking moment with one's beloved: the same mindset that wants to write their name all over the cover of your

exercise books so everyone in the class can see you have a girlfriend/boyfriend and will be madly jealous. I can't help feeling it doesn't bode well if you are already fighting to escape. I do hope he isn't the type who will end up outside your house with binoculars and bugging equipment to see what you're up to when he's not there with you. Doesn't he have any friends he might like to spend time with? If not I'd really worry. I assume you've tried being kind but firm. If all else fails, make sure you are only available when you want to be: get a colleague to answer your phone at work, put your answering machine on overtime, switch off your mobile and be charmingly vague about your movements.

CUCKOO IN MY FLAT I live alone in my one-bedroom flat, but was recently persuaded to take in an old friend for a week or so while he was waiting for his new flat to become available. That was a month ago: his flat isn't ready and I'm starting to feel put upon. He is quiet and studious but his muddy football gear is always drying on the radiators, he never buys milk, and his girlfriend

lives in the US, so he's on the phone to California for hours. Marcus, Fulham

He says: Your primitive territorial instincts are coming to the fore and, as the dominant male on home territory, you will find yourself picking a fight. If you want to maintain the relationship, he must go - soon. Put things on a formal footing: set a deadline by which he must leave.

She says: As he's an old friend I shouldn't think you want to dislodge him brutally. Instead, cultivate an antisocial hobby that will focus his ideas on speeding up the new-flat process. Take up the saxophone. (Do warn the neighbours it's only temporary.) Become macrobiotic and refuse to have any food but rice in the flat. Start fishing. Create a maggot farm. Anything like this might do the trick: you will know better than I do what he's particular pet hates are. As soon as he is out, go back to normal, of course. As for the milk: surely that's forgivable. And what do you think itemised phone bills are for?

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Rousseau flies in to save the tour

Brian Lara will have to be reinstated as captain to settle conflict. By Stephen Brenkley

ONE final flight into Heathrow Airport today will determine the future of West Indies' historic cricket tour of South Africa. It will have on board Pat Rousseau, an avuncular-looking, white-haired fellow who is no stranger to recent controversy and who holds the key to the settlement of an increasingly bizarre industrial dispute.

Rousseau is the president of the West Indies Cricket Board and his presence is crucial – of greater significance even than the letter of imprecation from another president, Nelson Mandela – to persuading the players of the Caribbean to take up their tools once more. To achieve any kind of positive resolution Rousseau must be prepared to make considerable concessions as well as rescinding several decisions he and his colleagues have already made (and might be deeply regretting). Not least among the latter, and in truth probably paramount, is the reinstatement as captain of Brian Lara. It will be an about-turn unparalleled in the sport but it is also one that Rousseau may have no option but to take.

Not that anything should be taken for granted in a stand-off which was mistakenly perceived at its outset to be mainly con-

cerned with Lara and his ego but is plainly about much wider issues, to wit, all West Indian international cricketers and their status. When Courtney Walsh, the great fast bowler and president of the West Indies Players' Association strolled lithely yesterday afternoon into the lobby of the airport hotel where he and his team-mates have been staying (boiled up, in the parlance of the dispute) he was clear in his view.

"It's good news for us that Pat Rousseau is coming," he said, not least perhaps because Rousseau had stated throughout the week that he was not prepared to come. "The West Indian cricket team are unanimous in their wish that the tour takes place. They fully appreciate the importance of the tour both to the Board and to the public of South Africa as emphasised by the letter of Nelson Mandela. We're equally unanimous that the tour can only take place if the West Indies Board met here with us in London in order to finalise contracts for the tour and draw up guidelines for future series."

Walsh read those words from a prepared statement but ex-



Shuttle diplomacy: Walsh and Bacher talk at a Heathrow hotel (left), where Brian Lara (right) kept a low profile

panded a little afterwards. He did not think it was really a dispute, he said, but the players merely wanted to negotiate. They wanted to safeguard the future of the youngsters coming into the game. Oh, and the reinstatement of Lara was a major part of the deal.

This strange affair of players boycotting a tour in which they openly admit they are desperate to participate began in mid-August when the West Indian

Board first sent out their proposed contracts for the trip. But it took its most significant twist barely more than a week ago in Bangladesh in a moment which may be described as when the economy seats all but broke the fast bowlers' backs.

Simply, the team who flew out for the Wills ICC one-day tournament involving all the Test playing nations discovered that they were alone in having been in the cheapest

seats. When you are an athlete tall enough to be a basketball player – and there are several in the West Indies team – this can cause extreme discomfort. It was probably this apparently trivial slight, as much as anything, which decided the players that it was time to make a stand. As captain, Lara was essential to the cause but he was by no means a lone provocateur. The Board then proceeded to get things badly wrong.

Instead of embarking for South Africa from Dhaka, Lara and Hooper flew to London where they met several other players who had not been to Bangladesh, including Walsh. Others who had been playing in the Bangladesh tournament flew on to South Africa as expected. The players in London, many of them senior, hoped that the Board would listen to their demands for a better deal. The Board did no such thing. They

convened a meeting at which they sacked Lara and his deputy, Hooper, and fined the others who were in London.

This immediately provoked an old-fashioned industrial dispute escalation. The players who were already in South Africa expressed solidarity with their colleagues and flew to London. They were accompanied by the tour manager, Clive Lloyd, who yesterday advised negotiation, and by Dr Ali Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, an old hand at cricket disputes, who came armed with the Mandela Letter.

There was an element, as there is in all the best strikes, of "yah boo sucks". The Board outlined what they saw as the sequence of events leading to the impasse. When they proposed the tour contracts, they said, the Players' Association did not respond for more than 40 days. On 27 October the Board agreed an increase of \$30,000 to \$355,000 in fees for the tour but stuck by their insistence that other long-term issues for fee structures could not be dealt with.

The players responded by saying that the 40-day delay had not taken place and that the dispute was not about fees, "it is about recognition of the rights of the players, respect of the players by the WICB." The Board sent Joel Garner to London to negotiate. He and Walsh appeared on several occasions in the same West Indies side and probably talked over old times.

Players and officials have been shuttling between two Heathrow hotels, conference telephone calls have been taking place regularly, Bacher has been smilingly optimistic. But nothing was happening. On Friday afternoon the players' agent, Jonathan Barnett, a respected but no-nonsense figure, turned up. He looked exasperated when he left. How could he negotiate when there was nobody to negotiate with? Rousseau had to be there. A few hours later Rousseau, who was last before the world when the Jamaica Test against England was abandoned last year, said he would be.

If nothing else, it all demonstrates that cricket can still capture the attention of the world. They should be some Test matches in South Africa this winter.

England's stress rehearsal

A SERIES of rash shots meant England wasted any chance of gaining what is obviously much-needed batting practice on the opening day of their tour match against South Australia here yesterday. A flurry of misjudgements meant they fell to 22 for 4 on their way to a paltry total of 187 at the batsman-friendly Adelaide Oval.

Strengthened by the return of the captain, Alec Stewart, Michael Atherton and Mark Butcher from injury and with a maximum of four innings remaining before the First Test in Brisbane on 20 November, four of their leading batsmen wasted their opportunity to impress in ideal conditions.

Eluding to hat, England were dismissed for a sub-standard total, which was looking even more so by the close as South Australia comfortably progressed to 26 without loss from 11 overs.

"It was a pretty poor effort really, not a good enough day for us with the bat," admitted David Lloyd, the England coach, without bothering to

BY MYLES HODGSON
in Adelaide

hide his disappointment. "You would like to think that your top-line batters would get a start – we have played a number of indifferent shots, and it was not good enough."

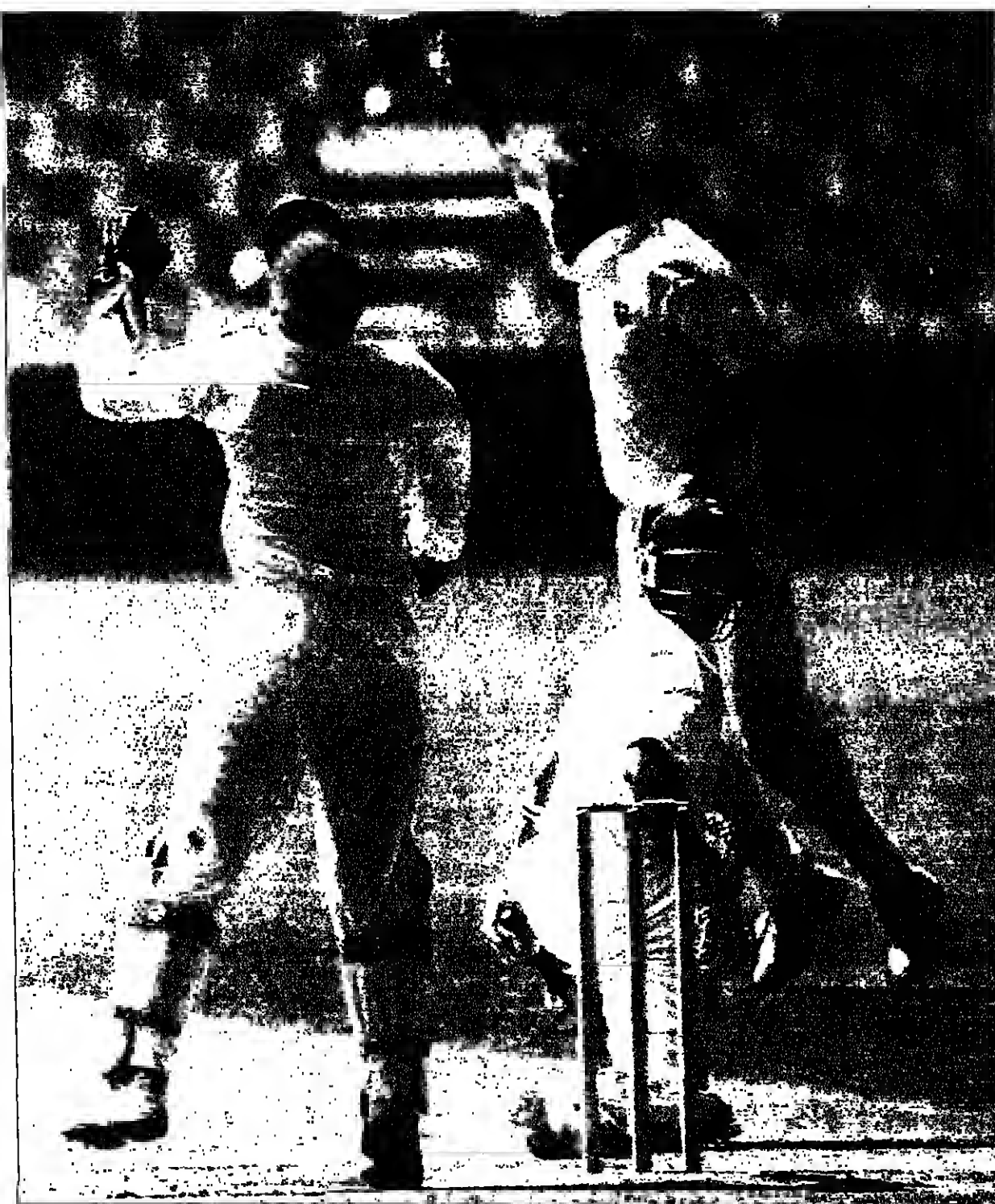
"The shot selection from everybody really has got to be better. We need to play much better than that, we can play much better than that and we will play much better than that," he said.

But for a determined 73-run partnership between Nasser Hussain and Mark Ramprakash, the only two of England's likely top-order batsmen for the First Test to reach double figures, followed by a gutsy half-century from Dominic Cork, the tourists may have struggled to reach even 150.

Despite lost Butcher, who edged behind in the sixth over of the morning, they had negotiated the first 15 overs without too many alarms only to lose Stewart, Graham Thorpe and Atherton in a spell of 22 balls to leave them struggling on 22 for four.

Atherton is the only member of that trio who could claim that luck transpired against him after being brilliantly caught at short leg by Martin Paul turning Jason Gillespie off his legs from the middle of the bat. But neither Stewart or Thorpe had any excuses when both were caught at slip and gully by Nathan Adcock after driving wildly at deliveries outside the off stump.

Hussain, the in-form batsman in the England party following his century against Western Australia in Perth, stood up to the responsibility of shielding England's long tail superbly and with Ramprakash providing solid support, cautiously guided the tourists away from their disastrous start.



Stinking feeling: Nasser Hussain realises his resistance is over as wicket-keeper Tim Nielsen celebrates

They punished the novice spin pair Andrew Crook and Ewan Arnold, both making their first class debuts, until more lapses in concentration also caused their downfalls and ended any hope of England reaching anything like a respectable total.

Ramprakash misread the turn exerted by leg-spinner Arnold and edged to slip while Hussain, attempting to guide

Crook down to fine leg, instead gave a simple catch behind to the wicketkeeper, Tim Nielsen.

Instead of the expected capitulation, however, Cork made his first half century for England since scoring 59 against New Zealand in Auckland nearly two years ago while Alex Tudor compiled an enterprising 33 to guide England past 150.

Lloyd stressed: "We are always after Corky to score runs

and the longer he can spend either accumulating or attacking at the crease the better. Young Alex Tudor also batted well, did all the right things and played with a straight bat. He let it go to his head at the end by chasing a wide one, but that's a good start for a lad who came here as number 17 in the squad."

But it failed to overshadow England's shortcomings and Lloyd added: "We are disap-

pointed because that is not a 187-all-out pitch. You could do without days like that but when they happen the only way to handle it is to roll your sleeves up and put the work in."

"There were no great terrors in that pitch apart from a bit of early movement and if they had the chance to get in they should have booked in for a long time. We have not covered ourselves in glory."

Sad end to a state of grace

BY ANDREW LONGMORE
Chief Sports Writer

THE only appropriate emotional response to the strike by the West Indian cricketers is an overwhelming sadness. Even on their broodier days, West Indians have shown an instinctive love and understanding of the game which goes deeper than the colour of the next bank note. Now, the heirs to a precious inheritance laid down by Lord Learie Constantine of Trinidad, Tuhago and Nelson (Lancashire) and Sir Garfield Sobers have to be talked down from the ledge to be paid for what most West Indians would gladly do for the price of the next run. The scowl has replaced the smile as the symbol of West Indian cricket. Or perhaps the rubbing together of thumb and forefinger, the universal language of the hustler.

It is easy to be nostalgic about the great West Indian sides. When they were indisputably the best side in the world for 20 years, their cricket was tinged with menace. The image of the joyous Caribbean cricketer looked a little different with a bat in your hand and Michael Holding 22 yards away. No teams were more calculating and single-minded than those captained initially by Clive Lloyd and then by Viv Richards, but their batting was still shot through with an attractively hedonistic streak.

From the days of George Headley, Clyde Walcott and Everton Weekes through to Viv Richards, run-making was an expression of character, individuality and sovereignty. The way the runs were made was as significant as their number and recklessness was always on the flip side of the cavalier's coin. The very vulnerability added to the attraction and spectators the world over flocked to watch them play. Politics were never far from the surface, but most inter-island and colonial inequalities were levelled once the team took the field.

The adulation which accompanied the rise of Brian Lara reflected universal joy at the perpetuation of a glorious tradition. Lara seemed to combine the best of Caribbean and orthodox methods just as

Headley, the Black Bradman, had reputedly done before and after the Second World War. Lara bats like a West Indian should, with classical rigour yet a barely disguised disdain for the refinements of the coaching manual. The backlift is too prominent, the footwork a little casual and the shot selection often dubious, except that Lara in full flow renders such matters largely irrelevant. It did not, perhaps, could never, last. The tainting of Lara has been one of the more melancholy of recent morality tales. The fact that the most gifted batsman of this or any other generation should be the focal point for some say the cause of the discontent within the West Indian camp serves only to sharpen the indignity.

The people of the Caribbean can quite justifiably feel insulted by their team's sulks. It is doubtful if the streets of Kingston or St John's will be awash with sympathy for cricketers who, by the standards of the locals, are handsomely paid. Whether the overtly emotional pitch taken by Ali Bacher struck the right chord is equally open to question. But the West Indies' reaction to his arrival, bearing a note from Nelson Mandela, was aptly summed up by Courtney Walsh, who kept him waiting for half an hour. This is the man who has done more than anyone to break down apartheid barriers in South African sport.

The West Indians have been nurturing grievances against their Board for some years. Divisions have been heightened by the rival candidacies for the captaincy: Jamaicans rallying behind Walsh, Trinidadians for Lara. And now, new home for the Board's offices, harbour ambitions of their own. Neither is the parous state of the Board's finances anything new. What has changed is the attitude of the cricketers. The charn has gone, mislaid amid the potted palms and piped music of a non-descript hotel near Heathrow. Not much of a place to lose a glorious tradition.

Forget the barbs, we'll stick to the middle way

WHEN England hit town the Australians like nothing better than getting straight into us. No sooner had we left Perth with the words of Justin Langer ringing in our ears than we arrived in Adelaide to discover that Greg Chappell was entering the fray.

Langer played at Middlesex last season and I was initially surprised by his harsh comments about England's decline. Western Australia, Chappell has handed us as a team without much flair. It is good to know that the phoney war is continuing. It is obviously part of a deliberate policy to subject us to a bombardment of such comments and we are noting them all.

England might have done better against WA but there were still many positive aspects to the game.

The WACA pitch is a one-off, like nothing in England and perhaps the fastest in the world. Playing on it so early in the tour gave us an invaluable work-out for the Second Test there.

It was extremely hard and quick and allowed the bowlers no lateral movement at all. The ball grew soft early and batsmen who are capable pullers and cutters can play off the back foot. It is a pitch which has different requirements from those to which we are accustomed. On the bowling front, Alan Mullally swung the ball and Darren Gough found a steady rhythm. Gus Fraser had a tough time of it but do not be too worried about that – other pitches will suit him more. Most of the batsmen spent some time at the crease, and it's in the middle where it's important. Nets can do so much but it

is during matches that you begin to put into practice your strategy.

When Langer set England a target after declaring in the second innings it was not our immediate intention to play for the draw, but it would have been reckless to go for a win straightaway. We had only five specialist batsmen and one of those, Mark Butcher, had several stitches in his face after ducking into a short ball which squeezed through the visor on his helmet. That's how quick the pitch is – one slight misjudgement, (which is all it was, no more) and a batsman can be surprised.

By chasing the runs all the way through we might easily have put needless pressure on our tail, getting them to take chances by sweeping and improvising, which we don't want them to do at this stage. When John Crawley was out soon after tea



MARK RAMPRAKASH

on the last day it would have been silly to get out trying for quick runs. We would not throw away Test matches like that and it is important to remember that this was our first four-day game. Time in the middle could not be over-rated, whatever Justin said.

WA, however, are a good example of the strength in depth of Australian cricket. They had five international players out, yet they were still superbly competitive. A couple of rookie middle-order batsmen played with a really keen, well-honed approach. Matt Nicholson, the bowler who took seven wickets in the first innings, had been out of the game for 18 months with chronic fatigue syndrome but looked a real prospect: quick and on target. Mind you, he bowled 38 overs at us, so no wonder he had chronic fatigue syndrome.

Australia's young players know how hard it is to get in the team, they know they have to be spot on from one match to the next. Their 21-year-olds are comparable to those of Middlesex who made their debuts last season: English players have the tal-

ent but they must be a touch more professional in their approach.

Where we realise we must improve is in our catching – we put down several chances in the WA match. Different light, different pace off the pitch had something to do with it but the point is very much that we have to get it right for the Tests. We know we have to play constantly as a unit in every session because the match can slip away in that time.

Our arrival in Adelaide not only coincided with Greg Chappell's observations but also brought back several memories. Awaiting me in the hotel was a fax from somebody who described himself as the fastest bowler I ever faced. It was Carl Maynard who used to bowl bouncers at me when we played in Middlesex Under-11s together, was forced to

give up the game with a bad back and is now living over here.

I first came to Adelaide 11 years ago with the England Under-19 team in the first World Cup. We reached the semi-final and played against Australia, whose attack was opened by a gangly left-arm fast bowler who swung it. He also got me out if I remember correctly. His name was Alan Mullally.

The last time I was here was four years ago when I was called up from the A tour to join the senior squad because of injuries. I did not play in the Fourth Test in Adelaide but I did arrive in time to see Mike Gatting spend an eternity on 99 before finally getting his century. There's a notice in the Adelaide dressing room saying M W Gatting was the last Englishman here. We must try to update that.

السلامة



THE COMPLETE SKI GUIDE

TRAVEL

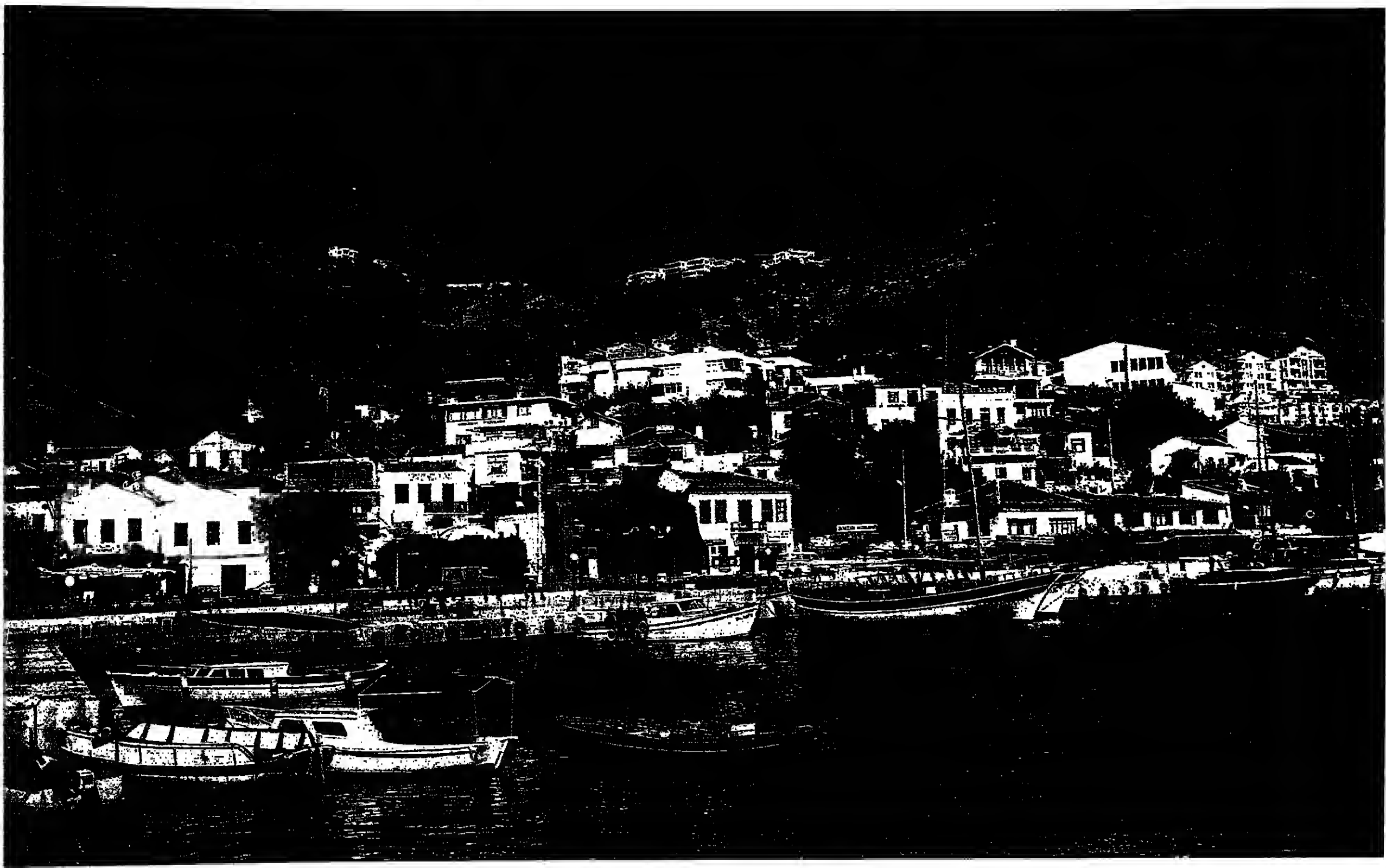
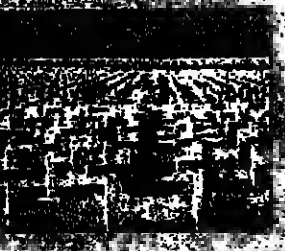
THE COMPLETE SKI GUIDE



THE FLAVOUR OF SCOTLAND



PILGRIMAGE TO THE SOMME



Where winter blues turn a stunning shade of turquoise

Penny Young joins the army of modern invaders on the southern shores of Turkey

MOST OF the time, I sit slumped in a chair on the balcony overlooking the sweep of the bay or sprawled on a heap on the rocks underneath, mesmerised by the green and blue of the sea as I toast in the autumn sun. Opposite, so close you can reach out and touch it, is a Greek island, although I'm actually sitting in Turkey in the small Mediterranean resort of Kas (pronounced Kash).

For years, I've avoided the southern coast of Turkey. Sniffily, I remember what it was like in the 1970s when the coastline was beautiful and empty and villages such as Bodrum and Kusadasi were mere gleams in a developer's eye. But after our non-summer, I needed to absorb some sunshine to be able to slide more gracefully into winter. "Why don't you go to Kas?" says a friend firmly.

A young man with popping eyes met my bus which arrived just past midnight at the station. Effortlessly, he rounded up the stray tourists - me and a couple from Liverpool - and led us to his pension around the corner. There was room only for the couple, so he took me into the family house, throwing his mother out of a large back room with three couches in it. She was praying at the time. "Would you like to drink cold beer?" he asks. "How long will you stay? We could play cards together. Chat. This house is yours."

I escape at first light the next morning, squeezing past him still exuding goodwill and future hopes in the doorway, and stumble down the hill for my first daylight sight of Kas.

The setting is superb. A little town



perched on the rocks in a bay studded with promontories and islands, cradled in an amphitheatre of steep rocky peaks towering overhead. Its heart is built around a small harbour which bobs and jingles with filthy-rich motor launches, diving boats, sailing yachts and tourist pleasure craft. The newly built holiday infrastructure is so far contained in a cluster of pensions built up the hill on the west shore, although nearly everybody has turned their home into tourist accommodation of some kind or another. Fortunately, plants and shrubs grow fast in the rich Mediterranean climate and most of Kas is covered by rampant jasmine which drenches the air with its scent, while the little white flowers glow like stars in the dark.

The sons and daughters of the original Kas fishermen and farmers are now busy making money out of their restaurants, cafés and beautiful shops. One cobbled street of wooden Ottoman houses has been restored: balconies, windows and doorways are stuffed and



Kas (top) looks untouched, but it has an internet café and expensive shops selling kilims made by locals (above) NADIA MACKENZIE WORLD PICTURES

hung with carpets, jewels, antiques and fabulous things - at fabulous prices. The items in one of the shops are all marked up in deutschmarks.

Occasionally I tear myself away from my view of the sea from the balcony of my small hotel on the east side to perambulate around town, buying fresh succulent figs and sweet grapes from the stalls in the market square and cheap bottles of Kavaklidere red wine, admiring the multi-coloured

tubs of saffron from Iran, Spain, Turkey, Afghanistan and Syria in the spice shops and peering in through the windows of the Kas and Carry carpet emporium. If I had e-mail, I could pick it up at the internet café nearby.

Kas is situated on the bit of the Turkish coast which used to be the home of the Lycians, who spent a lot of time building sarcophagi. You can't move but you trip over an enormous tomb. I catch the bus to Kinik to the

west of Kas to walk from there up the hill to sweat around the ruins of Xanthos, once the capital city of Lycia.

First stop - a heap of stones. A helpful noticeboard displays a picture of what once graced the spot. It was a monumental building decorated with statues of graceful water nymphs which had endured for two-and-a-half thousand years or so until the British whisked it off in the 1830s to rebuild it inside the British Museum. Undeterred, the tourists take photographs of any stone that is left unturned.

To the horror of the Turks, I walked up the road soaking up the scorching sun rather than catching the bus. The ditches were filled with water turtles and frogs which hurl themselves into the muddy water with a resounding plop as I march past. I can't blame them.

The thing about the Turkish Mediterranean is that however busy it seems to be getting and however built up it becomes, it was just as busy, if not busier, in days of old. Wherever you look, you can find the ruins and remains of towns and cities and monuments inhabited by the ghosts of Lycians, Persians, Greeks, Romans and Byzantines. One of the most relaxing things to do is to spend a whole day ruin-spotting on a boat trip eastwards along the coast to Kekova and Kale.

The boat slides over the green glassy sea, stopping every so often to let everybody off for a swim, the remains of castles and cities dotting the empty shore. Whole towns even lie under the sea. Lunch is at the little seaside village of Ucagiz where satellite

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14,000 ft 1 weekend.

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The only way is down: an off-piste skier surveys the surrounding Cairngorms – the most popular area in Scotland for winter sports

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO...

Skiing

In the third part of our fortnightly guide to skiing, **Juliet Clough** explores the wide range of winter resorts in the wild beauty of the Scottish Highlands, where ease of access is matched by value for money, and there are a few seriously challenging runs for experienced skiers

SCOTTISH SKI resorts have had a rather thin time during the balmy winters of the past few years. Last season was one of the worst in memory. By late October, snow in the Cairngorms was already lying as far down as 2,500ft. In a good year, skiing continues until the third week in April.

Skiing in Scotland is cheap and easily accessible. It is also a bit of a toss-up: glum days of hazy and zero visibility balanced against days of blue skies and knee-deep powder, intervals when those who persevere are rewarded with conditions as good as any.

Snowboarding and off-piste possibilities mushroom, resorts remain small and unpretentious, a description whose subtlety ski snobs may read as "crowded and uninspiring". But for the dedicated, Scottish skiing offers serious challenges. The scheduling in Scotland of international events such as last year's melted-off Europa Cup Finals, are evidence that skiing here has finally come of age.

And there are cost reductions for juniors and senior citizens on most of the prices quoted.

CAIRNGORM

Tucked into two central Highland valleys, this is the most popular resort, with 17 lifts (some decidedly antiquated), a snowboard fun-park and good cross-country and off-piste options. An all-round centre with almost 30 runs divided equally among beginners, intermediates and experts, plus one difficult black run. A hoped-for expansion into the surrounding wilderness

is proving controversial due to environmental concerns. Uplift capacity is 12,043 per hour, but Cairngorm can get crowded at weekends. Best for shops and nightlife.

How to get there

A9 trunk road to Aviemore (10 miles west). Overnight sleeper train from London to Aviemore, or day train with GNER, links with five daily bus services to slopes. Regular flights to Inverness, 40 minutes' drive from the resort, with EasyJet, Air UK, BA.

Cost

Day ticket, £20; beginner, £10; five-day £80. Instruction: half-day from £15; two days £24. Ski hire from £13 per day; snowboard from £16; clothing hire from £12 per day. Lift-pass, tuition, and equipment hire package: two days, £65 adult, then £25 per additional day, from Cairngorm Snowsports School (tel: 01479 810363).

Where to stay

Wide range of hotels, guest-houses, b&b, hostels and self-catering accommodation in Aviemore and surrounding villages. Two-night weekend break prices from around £35. Stakis Hotels in Aviemore and Cullinbridge from £35 to £65 per person per night, b&b (tel: 01479 811811). Aviemore TIC (tel: 01479 810363).

Information

Cairngorm Ski Area, Aviemore Inverness-shire PH22 1RB (tel: 01479 861261; e-mail: <http://www.aviemore.co.uk>). Ski Hotline (tel: 0891 654655 – calls at 50p per minute).

GLENSHIE

Scotland's "Trois Vallées" – the largest of the resorts. A spectacular location between Blairgowrie and Braemar takes in four Munros, giving access to 40km of marked pistes and off-piste skiing but gets crowded at weekends. Excellent for intermediate and advanced skiers – its formidable Tiger run is the steepest in Europe, a crèche, snowboard fun-park and first-aid centre. Snow Fun Week: 1-5 March.

How to get there

A93, about 90 minutes from Edinburgh by road; train to Perth or Dundee; frequent flights to Aberdeen (69 miles), Edinburgh (84 miles) and Glasgow (101 miles).

Cost

Day lift-pass £18; five-day lift-pass £72; five-day package (pass, tuition and hire) £95. Alpine-ski hire £13 per day, £50 per week; snowboard, £17 per day, £34 per week. Combined Glenshee/Glencoe Ski season ticket gives unlimited access, price £250.

Where to stay

Wide choice of small, friendly places in Braemar (nine miles) and Blairgowrie (25 miles). B&b from £16 per person per night. Nearest hotel: The Spittal of Glenshee (six miles); weekend package: £68 per person (tel: 01250 885215). Braemar TIC (tel: 01339 741600).

Information

Glenshee Ski Centre, Cairnwell, by Braemar, Aberdeenshire AB35 5XU (tel: 013397 41320). Ski Hotline (tel: 0891 654656).

013397 41320). Ski Hotline (tel: 0891 654656).

NEVIS RANGE

The newest and, at 4,000ft, the highest skiing in Scotland took off in 1989 on the slopes of Aonach Mor, near Fort William. Other resorts are starting to take their cue from Nevis Range's user-friendly approach. A gondola carries visitors to the outcrops; views of Ben Nevis take the breath away. The "Braveheart" chairlift, new in the 1996/97 season, has almost doubled the available area, providing exhilarating wilderness skiing. Nevis Range plays host to several top events including, in April, the Fédération Internationale de Ski Scottish Championships. The area has a good record for late-season skiing, into May.

How to get there

Aonach Mor is seven miles north of Fort William, which is 76 miles south-west of Inverness. ScotRail serves Fort William from Glasgow, a distance of 10 miles. Nearest airports: Inverness, Glasgow and Edinburgh (138 miles). Bus service from Fort William.

Cost

Day lift-pass costs £18.50; five-day pass £75. Ski schools charge £16 per day; clothing hire is £10 per day, and equipment costs £13 per day. Two-day package (lift-pass, hire and four hours of skiing instruction): beginners £62, advanced £80; five-day package: beginners £136, advanced £150.

Where to stay

There is plenty of tourist accommodation in and around Fort William. Basic b&b from £14, weekend breaks from £26.50. Alexandra Hotel and Milton Hotel and Leisure Club: b&b from £32.50 (tel: 01397 701177). Fort William TIC (tel: 01397 703781).

Information

Nevis Range, Torluoddy, Fort William, Inverness-shire PH33 6SW (tel: 01397 705825). Ski Hotline (tel: 0891 654660).

GLENCOE

The site of the first permanent ski tow in Scotland, erected in 1956, Glencoe remains the toughest proposition of them all, a real skier's resort, the one with fewest lifts and most hairs on its chest. But, out of the five resorts, Glencoe has the plateau area best suited to beginners and the fierce Fly Paper run is arguably Scotland's most challenging run, comparable to a good European black: Elive Glades is of championship standard. Recent refurbishments include a beginners' lift. Improvements to the Plateau Café are eagerly awaited.

How to get there

Glencoe lies 70 miles north of Glasgow and 26 miles south of Fort William, on the main A82. The nearest railway stations are Bridge of Orchy (12 miles) or Fort William. Flights to Glasgow or Inverness (108 miles). There is a bus service to Glencoe from Glasgow.

Cost

Day lift-pass £17; five-day £68; four hours ski school £18; five-day packages including passes, hire and instruction, from £80; ski hire £13; five-day boarding package £155. A combined Glencoe and Nevis Range midweek ticket is £68.

Where to stay

Accommodation in Glencoe (five miles), Ballachulish (seven miles) or Onich (19 miles) from £15 for b&b. Kingshouse Hotel, Glencoe from £26 b&b (tel: 01855 851299). The Isles of Glencoe Hotel and Leisure Centre or the Ballachulish Hotel, both in Ballachulish, from £33 for two nights b&b accommodation (tel: 01855 821582). Fort William TIC (tel: 01397 703781).

Information

Glencoe Ski Centre, Kingshouse, Glencoe, Argyll PA39 4HZ (tel: 01855 851226). Ski Hotline (tel: 0891 654658).

THE LECHT

Pocket-sized, roadside resort on the notorious Cockbridge to Tomintoul road, the one that is always the first to get snow-blocked. As it is basically one big, sheltered nursery slope, The Lecht is especially suitable for beginners; you can watch the kids without having to stir from the café or the car park. Good piste grooming and a snowboard fun-park make this a pleasantly undemanding centre for family days out.

How to get there

Fifty-seven miles west of Aberdeen and 50 miles east of Inverness, on the A939. There are frequent flights and trains to both cities.

Cost

Day lift-pass £12; five-day pass £44.50. Private instruction £18 per hour; class lesson £15 for two hours; Alpine-ski hire £11 per day. Weekender two-day package (lift-pass, two-hour tuition each day and equipment hire) £60; five-day Super Pack £100.

Where to stay

B&bs in the area start at around £16. Nearest hotels: Allargue Arms, Corgarff, Gordon Hotel and Glen Avon, both in Tomintoul; details from Tomintoul TIC (tel: 01807 580285). Braemar TIC (tel: 013397 41600).

Information

Lecht Ski Company Ltd, Corgarff, Strathdon, Grampian AB36 8YP (tel: 01975 651440). Ski Hotline (tel: 09001 654657 – calls cost 50p per minute).

FACT FILE

ON THE SLOPES IN SCOTLAND

Getting there

By rail: GNER runs a frequent daily service to Edinburgh and Glasgow, e.g. a return from London starts at £19; and London to Aberdeen, Perth, Aviemore, Dundee and Inverness costs from £23 return (tel: 0345 225225). ScotRail do an overnight service, London to Inverness and Aberdeen, from £62 return, plus £29 each way for sleeping berth. Glasgow to Fort William, £30.60 return (tel: 0345 550033). Virgin Cross Country Apex fares: London to Glasgow from £30; Plymouth to Aberdeen from £89 return; Birmingham to Edinburgh from £25; Bournemouth to Glasgow, from £43 (tel: 0345 222333).

All rail enquiries: tel: 0345 484950. Be sure to check on company policy on carrying skis; a charge may be applicable for use of guard's van.

By air: All fares plus £10 tax and subject to availability. Ski equipment travels as part of standard luggage allowance but check on booking that the plane is of a size to carry it. EasyJet: Luton to Edinburgh from £15 (Nov/Dec), Edinburgh to Glasgow from £19 (to end March); Aberdeen and Inverness from £29; all fares single (tel: 01582 445566). Ryanair: Stansted to Prestwick from £58 return plus one-third off ongoing rail tickets to anywhere in Scotland (tel: 0541 569569).

British Airways: Gatwick to Inverness from £79 return; Heathrow and Gatwick to Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow from £59 return (tel: 0545 222111).

KLM UK: London City to Edinburgh and Glasgow; Stansted to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, from £59 (tel: 0990 074074).

British Midland: Heathrow to Edinburgh and Glasgow from £59 return; East Midlands to Glasgow and Edinburgh from £109 and to Aberdeen from £111 return (tel: 0345 554554).

By coach: Express coach services travel from most English cities to Scotland. Prices from £27 London-Glasgow; Scottish Citylink (tel: 0990 505050);

National Express (tel: 0990 808080).

Package holidays

Several companies offer coach travel plus cut-rate packages for all resorts, e.g. from £115.50 for five days self-catering chalet. Ty Scottish Ski Holidays (tel: 01250 874374) and Scottish Ski Tours (tel: 01479 821333).

Further information

Full run-down on all resorts, including accommodation, from Scottish Snowsports and Winter Activities brochure, by post from the Scottish Tourist Board, Freepost, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 7UZ, or tel: 08705 511511. Snow reports on page 420 Ceefax and page 204 Teletext.



4 TRAVEL

Life beyond the Fringe

Fiona Sturges visits Edinburgh out of festival season and finds a thriving arts scene to rival that of its bigger neighbour, Glasgow



Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre, where the bar is as much of an attraction as the plays

KEN PETERSON STILL MEETING

WORD HAS it that the residents of Edinburgh are losing pride in their castle. As water-proofed tourists head for Castle Rock to take in the military memorials and admire the view, the shadow of Scotland's finest fortress looms larger than ever across the town, depriving its more modest attractions of much-needed trade.

And the festival. Don't mention the festival. As autumn recedes into winter, it seems that Edinburgh's annual Fringe celebrations have exhausted the appetite for the arts, reduced hotel proprietors to staring forlornly at their empty foyers and left visitors under the impression that there is nothing left to do.

"We really wanted to come for the festival, but all the hotels were booked up," said a visitor from Dorset. "We've done the castle and the palace. Now we're off Glasgow to do the galleries."

This is the just attitude that gets Edinburgh's tourist board frothing at the mouth with rage. In fact, they are so determined not to be eclipsed by Glasgow's glittering arty reputation that they have created a new incentive to keep you from jumping ship. The Ultimate Arts Pass offers a spectacular range of discounts at more than 20 venues across the city in conjunction with a handful of hotels, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the city's rich cultural life, taking in anything from dance and theatre to painting, photography and film.

It was this golden ticket that lured me to Edinburgh on a drizzly October weekend and, having faithfully promised that I would not under any circumstances visit the castle, I prepared to embrace Edinburgh's panoply of hidden treasures.

The art world is often of the opinion that there is an inherent parochialism to be found in galleries outside London, but scraping beneath Edinburgh's conservative veneer I discovered a prolific art scene frequented by people who would have been equally at home in London's Hoxton, the relentlessly hip hub of young British art.

The National Gallery of Modern Art, for example, is a light, laid-back venue despite its rather severe exterior. Cramped with 20th-century paintings and sculpture, including work by Magritte, Matisse, Picasso, Miró and Dalí, it is frequented by chattering students, who also take advantage of the prestigious touring exhibitions which are winging their way down to London.

There is also a relaxed feel to the galleries that is rarely encountered down south. A child in a pushchair leant towards an installation by Mona Hatoum that consisted of 240 wire cages each containing flickering light bulbs emitting amplified crackling noises. As he tugged on the wire, I scanned the room for a fire extinguisher and waited for the inevitable telling-off, but the gallery attendant simply chuckled, remarking how a child had appropriated it as a climbing frame on the previous day and had to be gently disentangled from the cables. But the real thrill factor of the gallery lies in its approach via the picturesque Water of Leith walkway. This meandering and overgrown path serves perfectly to clear the head before grappling with the complexities of 20th-century art.

The Old Town above Market Street, exotically known as the "gallery quarter", is a haven for tiny boutique studios as well as the national museums. The Fruitmarket is a lively affair particularly tailored for a young audience, with its breezy café and startlingly loud music. The erstwhile market building cast off its gloomy exterior when it was given an expensive makeover back in 1992 and now boasts two storeys of light and airy spaces. It hosts touring exhibitions and the current show, "10X98 European Commissions", is well worth a look.

A group of virtually unknown photographers vividly capture the changing notions of Europe through deliberately clichéd images of different countries, from England's bone china and bowlers to the back of a copiously gelled Italian head, capped with Ray-Ban shades. This is not the most soothing of spaces - during my second visit a gaggle of young people in the bar resolved a music dispute by changing the tape every 30 seconds - but is refreshingly unsanitary and should perhaps be visited in the morning, before the students arrive bestowing their musical gifts.

For those with more sober tastes, the National Gallery of Scotland boasts early Florentine and Northern and Italian Renaissance art, plus an array of work by Scottish luminaries such as Wilkie and Raeburn. Entry is free but your pass will afford you a 10 per cent discount off the shocking array of Raeburn mugs, T-shirts, stickers and fridge magnets available in the shop, should you want them.

The sea of beige and brown baskets at the Royal Museum sent me scurrying straight outdoors to admire the immaculate new Museum of Scotland. This project was nearly abandoned after Prince Charles expressed reservations, but the building's trustees eventually went ahead anyway. Made from local sandstone, the building is a welcome departure from the classical solemnity of other museums and will be open to the public on 1 December. If appearances are anything to go by, this is sure-fire competition for anything Glasgow has to offer.

With a restorative fix of whisky still sloshing about in my belly, I am swept off to the Traverse Theatre for the evening. This venue is always filled to the rafters throughout the festival

but appears to be the town's social epicentre out of season, with its industrial-style bar and an alarmingly trendy though perfectly friendly restaurant.

The play we saw was unconvincing to say the least, with feeble performances, but again I warmed to the theatre's air of geniality. But I was warned by the theatre critic of the local arts magazine not to let the play put me off. "There are more good plays here than there are bad, and the bar makes up for it," he assured. "You don't see young people flooding to the National Theatre in London for a piss-up, now do you?"

The Ultimate Arts Pass is available when you book your trip through the Edinburgh Tourist Board's 'Short Breaks' brochure. Special offers include two tickets for the price of one in all major theatres, up to 50 per cent discounts for galleries and gallery shops and a 50 per cent discount on pre-concert lunches. For more information, call the Edinburgh Tourist Board (tel: 0131-473 3855).

With a restorative fix of whisky still sloshing about in my belly, I am swept off to the Traverse Theatre for the evening. This venue is always filled to the rafters throughout the festival

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HOW TO ENTER

Simply collect any three tokens in The Independent and Independent on Sunday between Saturday 7th and Friday 13th November and send them together with your completed coupon to 'Independent Club Med Ski Offer', Ref: 029, Sandylands House, Morecombe, Lancashire LA3 1DG. The closing date for entries is Wednesday 18th November 1998. All entrants will be sent a Club Med Voucher for your 'Free Ski and Boot hire'. Winners and runners up will be notified in writing, letters will be dispatched on or before Wednesday 25th November 1998.

Whether you are travelling as a family, couple, a group of friends or on your own, you'll find Club Med offers something for every inclination.

For a brochure call: 01455 852 202 and quote 'Independent'. Direct bookings and enquires call: 0171 581 1161 (0700 CLUB MED).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1) All entrants and guests must be 18 years old or over. 2) No purchase necessary. Missing tokens can be obtained by sending an SAE to: The Independent, Club Med Offer, 7th Floor, One Canada Square, London E8 5DL before the deadline. 3) The closing date for entries is Wednesday 18th November 1998. The winners will be notified by mail, these letters will be dispatched on Wednesday 25th November 1998 or before. 4) The holidays are as per the Club Med Winter Ski - 98/99 brochure and must be completed by the end of the season covered by this brochure (approx April 1999 depending on destination). 5) The prizes are seven inclusive one week holidays for two adults at selected Club Med Ski Villages subject to availability. 6) All holidays may be subject to alteration and change and exclude Christmas, New Year and Easter weeks. 7) The prizes are non transferable and can only be accepted as offered. There are no cash alternatives. 8) The seven sets of Rosignol CUT 9.6 skis for the runners up do not include bindings. 9) Photocopies, damaged or defaced tokens will not be accepted. Proof of posting will not confirm entry. We will not accept responsibility for items lost or damaged in the post. 10) Independent Newspapers shall not be liable for any costs, claims, injuries, damages or loss occasioned by any failure, however caused, to fulfil the terms of this promotion. 11) Employees of the Independent, their agents and members of their families and households are not eligible to enter. 12) No correspondence will be entered into and the Editors decision is final. Promoter: Club Med.

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If you do not wish to travel, please return this coupon to Club Med or other.

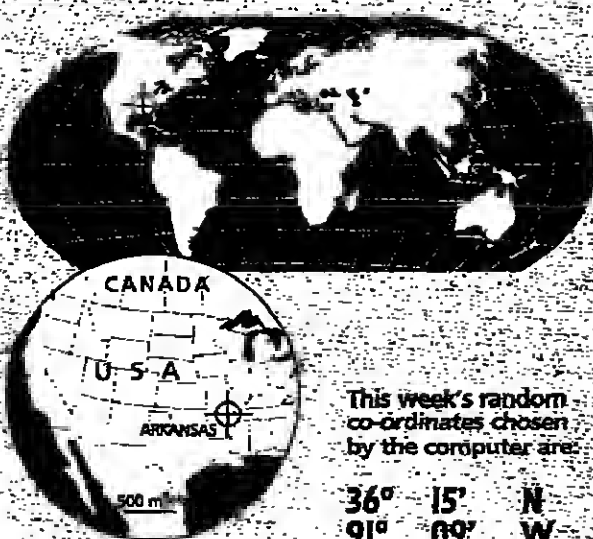
TOKEN 2

THE INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY



ROSSIGNOL Club Med

BEAM ME DOWN



This week's random co-ordinates chosen by the computer are:

36° 15' N
91° 09' W

FIRST REACTION

I never realised fishing could be this much fun.

COUNTRY AND REGION

You have landed in Lawrence County in the north-east of Arkansas, one of the southern states of the USA.

NATURE OF THE TERRAIN

You are in the valley of Spring River which winds its way down

from the Ozark Plateau to your north and west. Eastwards, the land settles into the lowlands of the Great Plains. The state takes great pride in its abundance of rivers and woods.

ALTITUDE

Just above sea level.

NEAREST SETTLEMENT

To the west lies a small town called Imboden, easily accessible

by road. Continue south and the silk trees and fields of flowers give way to lines in Black Rock, just south of the Old Davidsonville State Park. A former stagecoach stop on the old national road, lying just 10 miles east along Highway 60, is called Pocahontas, after the Native American heroine.

USEFUL LANGUAGES

English with very lengthy vowels. Allow extra time for appointments for fear of offending local acquaintances by rushing off before he finishes his sentence.

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

Bill Clinton is a local: maybe you'll catch him visiting old friends and relatives in the south of the state.

LIKELY WEATHER CONDITIONS

You have arrived at the most pleasant time of the year. Temperatures are dropping and rainfall is at its lowest.

POSSIBLE HAZARDS

Pay attention when saying the word "Arkansas". This is the only state in the USA where pronunciation is governed by statute. Also, as the hunting season is now in full swing, if you bear any resemblance to a

white-tailed deer, a turkey or a duck, beware.

REASONS FOR HANGING AROUND

Take a trip into the forest-clad Ozark mountains to meet some of America's true characters. If you are lucky you could stumble upon the locals jamming with their banjos, fiddles and mandolins - visit the Ozark Folk Centre at Mountain View for insights into their culture and lifestyle. And why not take part in the state's prime activities of hunting and fishing yourself? All you need is a licence (around £37.50). Then venture to the south of the state, to Hot Springs, and treat yourself to a soak in the recently restored Fordyce Bathhouse, built in 1915, before tracing the President's footsteps around this, his childhood home town.

GETTING THE HELL OUT

Just 40 miles north, along Highway 60, is neighbouring state Missouri. Or travel down to the smallest state capital in the US, Little Rock, and fly from Adam's Field, where a single ticket to Dallas costs £100, and from there you can get to international destinations.

Nicholas Barrall

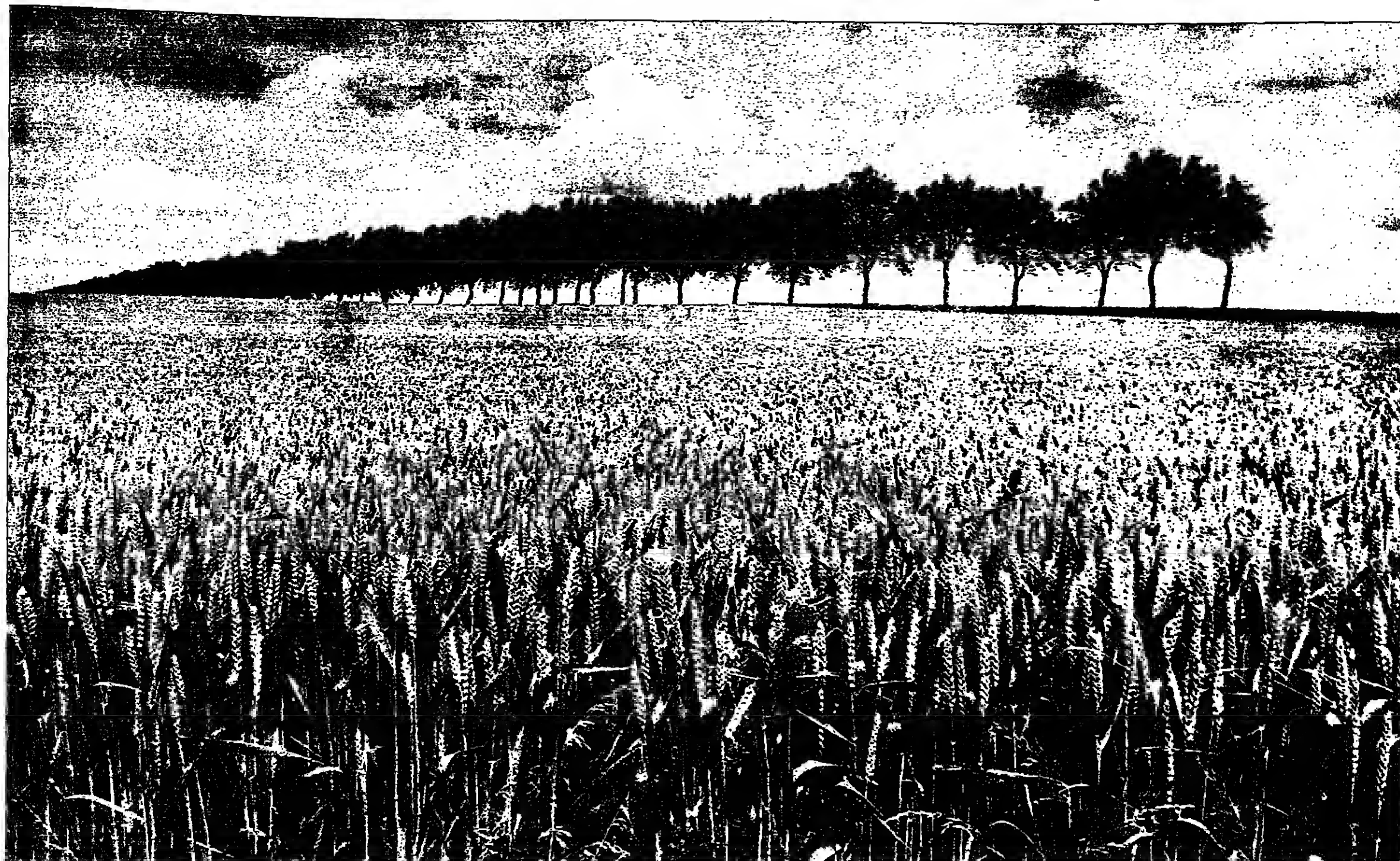
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The bleakest history lesson of them all

Jeff Howell is deeply moved by a visit to the First World War battlefields and graveyards of northern France



Many of the wartime battlefields are now under the plough – however every year farmers unearth a harvest of unexploded shells

PHOTO BY JEFF HOWELL FOR THE INDEPENDENT

ON 1 JULY 1916, 120,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers – most of them recent civilian volunteers – climbed out of their trenches and walked into a hail of German machine-gun bullets. By the end of the day 20,000 of them lay dead, and 40,000 were wounded: it was the greatest tactical blunder in British military history.

Most British people have heard of the Somme, but only a small proportion of British visitors to France visit the battlefields, perhaps not appreciating how close these sites are to home. Yet when the fighting was at its peak the shellfire could be heard throughout southern England.

In recent times there has been a surge of interest in the First World War. Martin Middlebrook, whose book *The First Day on the Somme* did much to spark the revival when it was first published in 1971, says: "The study of family history has become a popular hobby, and more people want to find out exactly what grandfather went through in the Great War. In many cases grandfather was a young man who suffered, died and was buried in France." The war is now also on the National Curriculum for GCSE history, and schoolchildren are persuading parents to take them on fact-finding trips to the battlefields.

Most of the raw volunteer troops of Lord Kitchener's army in 1916 sailed from Southampton to Boulogne, and were taken by train to base camps around Amiens before marching or being driven up to the front lines – some of them in double-decker red London buses shipped over for the

purpose. Today the Somme is an easy 100km drive from any of the Channel ports, which makes it ideal for a weekend trip. Whichever route you choose will take you through the rolling farmlands of Picardie, and through an area rich in military history. The drive south from Oostend runs close to the old Western Front for most of the way, past those other killing fields of Ypres and Passchendaele, and down to Arras, where the medieval tunnels and vaults were used by both sides in the First World War, and by the French resistance in the second. From Calais and Boulogne you can pass Etaples, the biggest British cemetery in France, and Montreuil, site of the British headquarters, complete with a statue of General Haig in the market place. Agincourt is close by, the battleground of a previous British expeditionary force under Henry V in 1415.

The Battle of the Somme takes its name from the *département* of that name, with the River Somme marking the southern end of the British sector. The ill-fated British action took place over a surprisingly small area, most of which can be covered in detail in two days by car, bike, or on foot. The small town of Albert, which changed hands several times during hostilities, is the natural place to stay, with its handful of small hotels and restaurants. The Somme is now a relatively poor area of France, however, and tourist facilities are less plentiful than in some other areas.

Nicholas and Pauline Kerr, from Kent, whom I met there, are typical of many

British visitors. Although they are unaware of any relatives of their own who died on the Somme, they found the visit highly moving. "You know you're coming to see war graves," said Pauline, "but you don't realise how many there are until you get here." Nicholas was impressed with the reception from the locals. "The attitude here to the British is incredibly friendly, unlike some other areas of France."

While much of the cratered land has now been returned to the plough – a deliberate policy by the French government to get things back to normal – there are still signs of the man-made inferno that raged over the area throughout the 1914-1918 period, as the same ground was fought over again and again. The most spectacular evidence is in the huge holes left from underground explosions; both sides dug tunnels under each others' trench positions, packed them with tons of explosives, and detonated them. The result, apart from the origin of the term "mine" for a hurried explosive, is a lunar landscape of craters. Most have been filled in, but some remain, such as the famous famous crater on Hawthorn Ridge and the Lochnagar Crater near Albert, which was recently bought privately to preserve it as a war memorial.

Trenches and shell holes are also visible in many places, especially in the wooded areas and, astonishingly, the local farmers still plough up an annual harvest of unexploded shells – even after 80 years. Each autumn there are piles of the things dumped at the side of the road for French

army bomb disposal teams to collect. Rifles, tin hats, barbed wire and corrugated iron dug-out roofs are regularly unearthed, and the better-preserved examples find their way into souvenir shops in the area.

But it is the cemeteries that provide the most profound souvenirs of the folly of the Great War. They are everywhere. The death statistics – 20,000 on the first day, 80,000 throughout 1916 (and these are only the British figures) – are just numbers until you are faced with that number of grave-stones to look at. The war graves are breathtaking. Maintained to an impeccable standard by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, and each one centred on a stone of remembrance with the legend "Their name liveth for evermore", they are probably the only decent thing to emerge from the slaughter. The most intimate are the small battlefield graves in no man's land between the front lines, some

containing fewer than a hundred graves. They bear the names of the battlefield landmarks of the day: Munich Trench, Railway Hollow, Blighty Valley. It is mind-numbing to think of the noise and violence that raged in these tranquil spots to cause so much death. Some also contain German graves – former foes lying side-by-side forever – there can be no clearer expression of the futility of war than this.

The bigger battlefield clearance cemeteries on the Serre Road contain thousands of graves, and are awesome in their own right. Most of the German dead, banished from the area by an irate French government after the Great War, are concentrated in four huge plots. I visited the one at St Vaast, which contains over 40,000 bodies: each cross bears the name of four dead soldiers. The Jewish German soldiers – and there were many fighting in the Great War – have their own headstones, marked with the Star of David.

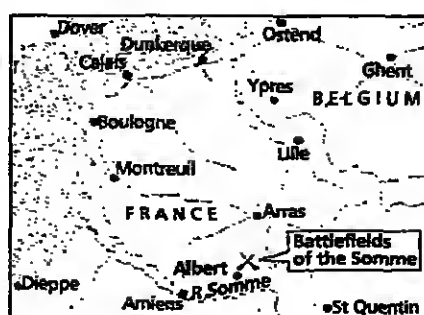
Even more moving are the memorials to the missing. The First World War unleashed such a level of explosive violence upon the human body that many were simply blown to bits, leaving no identifiable remains. The missing thousands are remembered by their names inscribed upon memorials, and by gravestones bearing the legend "A soldier of the Great War – Known unto God".

If you wish to find a particular grave or memorial, then contact the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (tel: 01628 634221) with as much detail as possible, and they should be able to give you an exact location within 10 days. From this month onwards it will be possible to search for this information direct from the commission's website (www.cwgc.org), a technology that would have astounded our poor forebears who fought and died in the mud of 1916.

See Home Front, Sunday Review

FACT FILE

THE SOMME



Getting there
Jeff Howell travelled courtesy of Sally Direct. The cheapest standard cross-channel car fare available is through the Sally Line (tel: 0845 600 2626). The Ramsgate-Ostend crossing costs £60 return for a car and two passengers. London-Albert costs £99 return on Eurostar (tel: 0990 186186).

Getting around
The battlefields can be explored by car or bicycle. Bikes can be hired from the tourist office in Albert (tel: 0333 322 751642). The Commonwealth War Graves Commission publishes maps of the cemeteries and memorials (tel: 01628 634221). Walking tours are organised by Mike Hodgson

and Martin Middlebrook (tel: 01205 364555).

Where to stay
Albert is the most convenient base, but has only a few cheap hotels. Contact the tourist office (tel: 0333 322 751642). The larger towns of Amiens and Peronne are also close, and offer good tourist facilities. Contact the tourist offices (tel: 0333 322 716050 and 844238 respectively).

Further information
Peronne has an excellent Great War museum, *Historial de la Grande Guerre*. Recommended books include Martin Middlebrook's *The First Day on the Somme* and *The Somme Battlefields*, both published by Penguin.

171 734 9822 for brochures

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All flights are return from Gatwick airport, through London Heathrow, to the U.K. and are via Amsterdam with KLM and partners. Flights from Scotland subject to £20 supplement.

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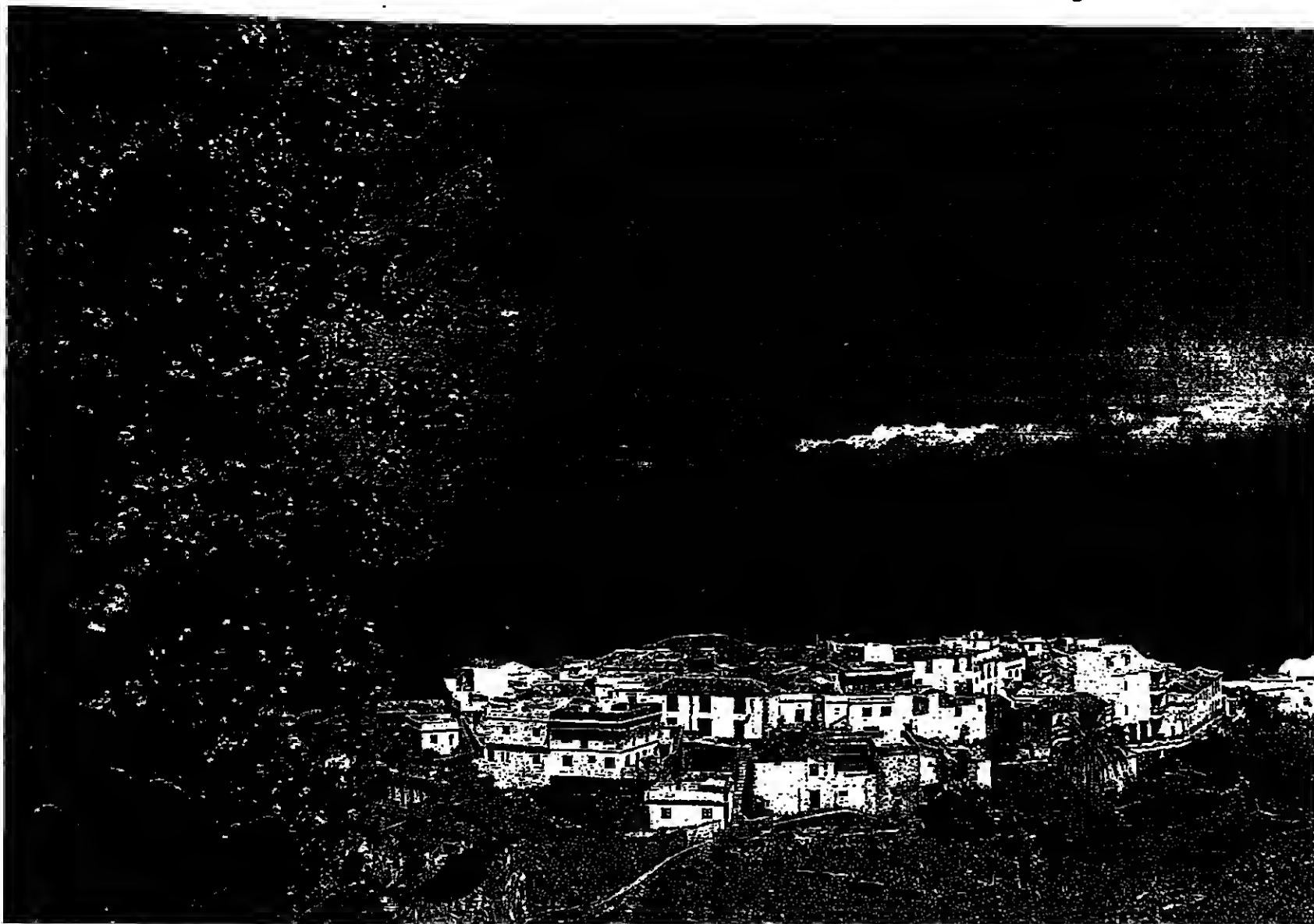
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Flights to USA must be booked by 14/11/98. All other flights must be booked by 21/11/98. Fares apply to selected dates and flights only and are subject to limited availability and restrictions. Fares include all airport taxes. Flights from Jersey via London Gatwick.

INFORMATION DESK

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY OUR PANEL OF TRAVEL EXPERTS

Write to: the Travel Editor, Independent on Sunday, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL fax 0171-293 2043; e-mail: sundaytravel@independent.co.uk



With sunshine virtually guaranteed in February, a week's walking on La Gomera in the Canaries offers a winter holiday with a difference

JAKE RAS/TONY STONE

An off-beat way to celebrate a 50th birthday

My 50th birthday is in February next year. I want a week's special holiday with my wife. She doesn't like skiing and I don't like beaches. We both enjoy food and drink and exploring. We have £1,000 to spend. Can you suggest something alternative and memorable?

Mike Cahill
Kidlington, Oxford

The travel editor replies: For an active holiday in beautiful surroundings with pretty well guaranteed winter sun thrown

in, it could be worth trying a pre-planned walking tour of La Gomera, in the Canary Islands.

This is the most uncrowded and unspoiled of the islands, giving walkers a rare "alone with nature" experience. The accommodation is chosen to add to the authenticity of the experience, and includes a restored country mansion, a small pension in a farming community (run by a local restaurant owner and providing traditional Gomeran fare) and a seafaring pension in a tiny fishing village.

The price of £652 per person for seven

nights is slightly beyond your budget but this is half-board. Available through Sherpa Expeditions (tel: 0181-577 2717).

For a snowy, wintry alternative - which need not involve skiing - how about seven days in the Black Forest, staying at the Hotel Schiff in Schluchsee, Germany? Flying to Basel with Crossair from Heathrow or Manchester, the package then includes rail travel to your destination via historic Freiburg, where you will transfer on to a memorable picturesque rail journey through the Black Forest.

In Schluchsee you can indulge yourself

on the food (influenced by nearby France and Switzerland), and witness the local crafts of glass-making, wood-carving and clock-building. In the surrounding woods you can take to the slopes on a sledge or (depending on energy levels) horse-drawn sleigh. You could take a day out to oar by Freiburg, visit historic buildings and museums, or take in a concert or two. Price of £459 includes an information pack on the area with OS map detailing local walking trails. For more information contact New Experience Holidays (tel: 01922 410909).

Happy trails in store for Texan visitor

We're trying to arrange a visit to the United Kingdom from San Antonio, Texas. We aren't having much luck on this end, as my desires do not fit the usual travel agency profiles. My wife and I would like to spend three to four weeks travelling the island using public transportation and B&Bs. We cannot seem to get anyone over here to help us. Do you know of an agency there that can be useful? The time of year really isn't important but, as we live in a warm area, we don't deal with the cold very well.

Neal Long
Texas, USA

The travel editor replies: If you are planning to travel within the UK independently, without the services of a tour operator, there are plenty of sources of useful information which should help to smooth the progress of your trip.

The British Tourist Authority (BTA) promotes Britain overseas. In the USA, the toll-free hot-line for the BTA (tel: 1800 GO 2 BRITAIN or 212 966 2200) offers advice which includes the best time of the year to travel, accommodation and options available for transport to and within the UK. They do not book anything on your behalf but can give you advice on where to go and can tell you agencies through whom to book. The web site for the BTA is at www.visitbritain.com. It's very comprehensive and is specifically geared to overseas visitors.

As for transport within the country, trains and buses can usually be booked right up to the point of departure. There are special passes and discounted tickets for rail travel that can be purchased through BritRail in the USA (tel: 1888 BRITRAIL). These deals are available only for overseas visitors.

A comprehensive guidebook to British B&Bs is *The Good B&B Guide* published by Which? and the Consumers' Association. It is available in the USA from book shops that deal with UK imports (ISBN number: 0852026935), or you can order it directly over the internet at www.penguin.com. The book contains specific descriptions and ratings on hundreds of family-run establishments across the country, which you can book directly.

YOUR HOLIDAY DISASTER

Ian Sanders discovered that Basil Fawcely is alive and well and living in Austria



THIRTY-SIX hours before the wedding, our honeymoon flights were changed from 6pm on Sunday to 6am. The reception was due to end at midnight 100 miles away and we had no car. A kindly relative stepped in to sort it all out: we were given two tickets for the "midnight express", the bus that goes to all of the airports, one by one. We had nothing to spare for a hotel, so we bedded down in the concourse at Heathrow for the hours left until check-in time.

We arrived at Salzburg and joined another bus, which herded us to a tiny and dull Austrian village, only to be transferred yet again. Hungover, hungry, tired and decidedly snappy, we were the only passengers with an annoyed tour guide, who promptly tried to sell us day trips. We pretended to be asleep, which was not a good idea on those churning mountain roads.

Following a tedious journey we arrived at our hotel. We presented ourselves to Herr Fawcely who said: "Your room is not ready. Go away." We turned to the rep, but she had disappeared. For two hours we slumped by the lake, watching the rain clouds gather. Finally, we got our room with a view of the lake, a balcony of dripping geraniums and, presumably, the mountains on the other side of the rain.

After a refreshing sleep and some of the champagne thoughtfully provided by our friends, we hurried for dinner. We were late. Herr Fawcely took us to our seats where we faced the ultimate horror. Two more crystal-eyed honeymooners looked up at us. "You are sharing table here. There is nowhere else." It shouldn't have been so bad, but it was. Perhaps it was a personal space thing. Of course none of us was so rude as to say that this was an unsatisfactory arrangement. We tried ignoring each other, but we were all just too horribly polite. Of course their flights hadn't been changed, had they?

The rain stopped five days later and we went walking. Several hours later we returned, dripping like two otters. Herr Fawcely smiled, handed us our key and two spa tokens. "On the house," he said. The next morning the sun streamed through the curtains, the scent of geraniums and steaming boots filling the room. My wife hates the smell of geraniums and reached for the inhaler. I rose to shut the window and realised that I had burned my feet in the sauna.

Our friends are horrified that we have trouble remembering where we spent our honeymoon. But there was one blessing. We swore always to travel independently and we have never looked back.

Share your holiday nightmares by sending a 600-word account to: Holiday Disasters, The Independent on Sunday, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5DL. E-mail: sundaytravel@independent.co.uk

When long-distance flying can be a pain in the back teeth

My boyfriend is going for some serious dental treatment the day before we fly to New York for a weekend break. I know it sounds a bit bizarre, but I've heard stories about people's teeth exploding in mid-air and we wonder if we should cancel the appointment.

J Stevens
London E5

Dr Larry Goodyer replies: To describe

teeth as exploding is a bit of an exaggeration, but people do sometimes complain of tooth pain during flights. Atmospheric pressure changes can cause quite intense pain in filled teeth, a problem sometimes experienced by deep-sea divers. This phenomenon - it's called Aereodontalgia - is well known to dentists, but as commercial airlines are pressurised the problem is rarely encountered. Pain can occasionally be felt if there is a space for gas to collect underneath a filling or tooth, so that the

small pressure changes at altitude are sufficient to cause problems. Occasionally a recently filled tooth which is still slightly inflamed might be aggravated by the flight. Don't cancel the appointment, but speak to your dentist about your concerns.

In general it is a good idea for all travellers to have a dental check-up, particularly before embarking on a destination where medical facilities are poor. Even if going to New York, where there will be no problem to find a good dentist, I am sure

you would not want the inconvenience of organising emergency dental treatment.

If you do have to be treated while away remember that dental surgery could carry a risk of contracting Aids or hepatitis B if equipment is not sterilised properly, particularly if using needles for local anaesthetic injections. Many sterile kits for travellers will include a dental needle. It is also a good idea to ensure the dentist is wearing rubber gloves while working on your mouth. DIY repair kits are fiddly to

use and probably worthwhile only if there is to be a delay before seeing a dentist. A dental abscess would be the most serious problem encountered by the traveller and regular sufferers should discuss with their dentist the possibility of travelling with a supply of the appropriate antibiotic.

Dr Larry Goodyer is a lecturer in clinical pharmacy at King's College, London. Contact the Normad Travel Health Helpline (tel: 0891 633414; calls cost 50p per minute).

Indonesia's ancients step into the 21st century

ROUGH GUIDE



Lucy Ridout and Lesley Reader, authors of 'The Rough Guide to Bali', on the land traditions which is entering the cyberspace

Holiest temple
Positioned on the slopes of Gunung Agung, the highest mountain in Bali, the mother temple of Besakih is the most venerated on the island. The site consists of 22 separate temples spread over a large forested area and the most important is Pura Penataran Agung, which rises on seven terraces towards the mountain. The entrance is a superb black, split gateway soaring skywards with the mountain standing proud behind. This is the holiest temple on the island and, apart from regular festivals, Balinese people are always praying and making offerings. With thousands of visitors daily the whole place can sometimes seem like a circus, but come early or late to avoid the chaos, or wander among the trees to the further-flung temples and there is a timelessness, a grandeur and a special atmosphere.

Most radical surfing
Desert Point off the southwestern tip of Lombok, is renowned for its classic tubes and its unbelievably long - and fast - left-handers. It's such a remote spot that the best way to reach the break is by chartered boat. Several specialist tour agents on Bali offer Desert Point "surfing" with food and on-board accommodation included. Desert Point is best surfed from September to June.

Best places to take the kids
You can't go far wrong if you book yourself and the kids into one of Bali's major beach resorts as the soft sands and tropical waters of Kuta, Sanur, Lovina and Candi Dasa all make fabulous playgrounds. But the

inland village of Ubud makes a nice change from the seaside and offers a good selection of child-centred activities. The best of these are the kids' workshops organised by an art museum known as ARMA. These include classes in Balinese painting, dancing and mask-carving. The most popular activity is batik painting where kids learn batik techniques, draw up their own designs and then apply them to scarves, T-shirts or sarongs. Several studios in Ubud offer more grown-up batik courses.

Finest food
While nasi goreng (fried rice) and nasi campur (mixed rice) are the most ubiquitous meals across Indonesia, gado-gado, steamed vegetables in peanut sauce, is a real classic. Often supplemented with chunks of bean curd, crunchy fried onions and whole peanuts, the Indonesians add plenty of chillies to what is already a perfect dish to create something that then sets the mouth, throat and stomach on fire.

Least explored region
Sparsely populated, mountainous, and in places extremely rugged, western Bali is rarely explored and yet has some great places. Beaches here are mainly black sand, but spectacular for all that. There's some good surfing along the south-west shore, particularly off the village of Medewi. Bali Barat, the island's only national park, is here too, with a handful of decent hikes and the likely prospect of spotting hornbills, black monkeys and wild boars, plus some of the most rewarding reef-snorkelling on Bali. There's an atmospheric garden

temple surrounded by forest on the slopes of the sacred mountain Gunung Babukau and a quirky museum dedicated to rice-farming techniques, unchanged for centuries.

Cheekiest sign
Bali and Lombok produce huge amounts of art and craft including textiles, wood and metalwork, jewellery, painting, bamboo and rattan wares, and pottery. However, the tourist delight in old items is well known, and "antique" is a description of an old look and finish, which local craftsmen are skilled at creating.

Bonniest baby
Bali is an amazing place for statues; there are thousands in temples, houses and beside the road. They come in all shapes, sizes and styles. However, the huge Buddha statue at a road junction in Sakah is so fresh faced and chubby cheeked with such a round tummy that it resembles nothing so much as a baby. Many religious statues in Bali are draped in a black-and-white checked cloth - strategic draping in this case means that it looks just like a podgy baby in a nappy.

Flashiest cybercafé
Bali has entered the cyber age with gusto and you'll find cybercafés in almost every resort. The fastest, most helpful and user-friendly of these is the Bali @ Cyber Café and Restaurant in Legian. As well as all the usual e-mail and net-surfing facilities (at a reasonable 50p per 15 minutes online), you can scan your holiday snaps and send them to friends and family as electronic postcards.



Best foot forwards: why not try a Balinese dance class? JOHN MIDGLEY/TONY STONE

FACT FILE

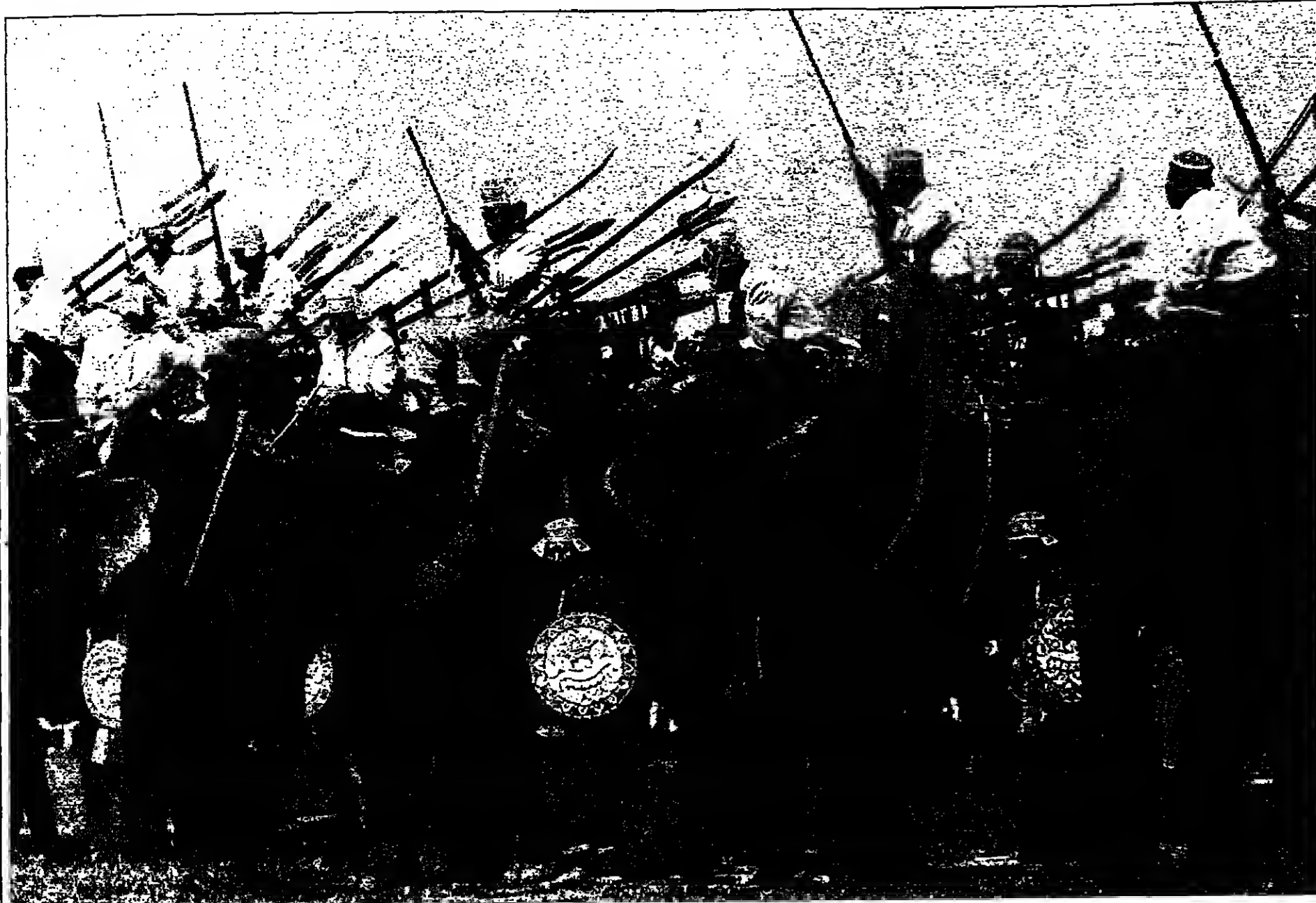
BALI

Getting there
Besakih is reached by minibus from Klungkung, which is served by regular buses from the Batubulan terminal in Denpasar.

What to experience
The longest established surfari operator is Wanasari Wisata at Jl Pantai 8b, Kuta (tel: 0862 361 755588, fax 755690). It will also organise connecting flights if you book from home.
Bali @ Cyber Café and Restaurant is at Jalan Pura Bagan Tiruna 4 in Legian (tel and fax: 761326; the website is <http://sunflower.singnet.com.sg/~hchua/cafe.htm>; e-mail address: hchua@idola.oel.id).
Tetebatu is in the southern foothills of Gunung Rinjani, the highest mountain on Lombok, and is a cool, popular tourist area with plenty of basic accommodation. It is reached by minibus from Pomonolung, itself accessed by regular cross-island buses from the Mandalika terminal in Sweta. Sakah is at the junction of the road north to Ubud and east to Gianyar.
The Agung Rai Museum of Art (ARMA) is located on Jalan Hanoman, Progoesekan, Ubud (tel: 976659).

WHAT'S ON WORLDWIDE

Horizontal showers ... Belfast meets the Big Apple ... sell your soul to Santa



Grey matters: Thailand's Surin Elephant Round-Up Show pits the big beasts against humans in trials of strength. Sonnets like a fair contest

ROBERT HARDING PICTURE LIBRARY

5-12 November
Belgium

Ever thought "why hasn't somebody invented that yet"? Get down to Eureka, the 47th exhibition of innovation and invention at Les Pyramides in Brussels, and you will probably find out that somebody already has. Last year saw such useful gadgets as a horizontal shower, a wet-nappy detector and a telescopic toasting fork.

8 November
USA

What do you get if you combine 5,000 eggs, 52lbs of butter and two gallons of parsley? An omelette fit for an army, of course. This giant culinary feat will be prepared in Abbeville in Louisiana to commemorate the legend that, on a march through its twin town of Bessières, Napoleon so enjoyed an omelette served to him by a local innkeeper that he ordered one for his whole army, too.

11 November
Indonesia

The Balinese don their Sunday best and treasured jewels to celebrate Galungan - the most important festival of good (Dharma) over evil (Adharma). Islanders symbolise this by fitting a *penjar*, a bamboo pole decorated with woven coconut leaves, cakes and flowers, on to the side of their houses.

12-29 November
Northern Ireland

This year's Belfast Festival is going to be the biggest and boldest ever, with the city

becoming the stage and gallery for some of the world's most talented artists. The theme is New York - a tribute to the influence Irish artists have had in the Big Apple. Among those taking part will be Yoko Ono, Van Morrison and Jeanette Winterson. Events will be held on Queen's campus and at other venues in the city.

13-23 November
Australia

The historic city-port of Fremantle, near Perth, goes culture-crazy for 11 days during its festival of theatre, music, art, poetry and music. A huge street carnival is the grand finale.

14-15 November
Thailand

Join the throngs of visitors to the Surin Elephant Round-Up Show, the celebrated display of some 100 trained elephants. Among other things, the giant animals demonstrate their strength in a tug-of-war against human opponents, their skills in log-pulling events, and their military uses in a parade in which they are kitted out for medieval warfare. The shows take place at the city's Main Stadium.

15 November
Canada

Christmas comes early in Toronto, as Santa Claus gets things underway in a colourful parade accompanied by marching bands, floats and clowns. A great chance to get your orders in early.

Nichola Burrell

PASSPORT

'Being a VIP gives you no special treatment'



MICHAEL WALDMAN

My latest project has been the making of *Planet Ustinov*, a TV film in which Sir Peter Ustinov travels along the same route as Mark Twain did in his book, *Following the Equator*.

The most ludicrous country we went to was Kiribati, in the Pacific. On entering the country, all of us, Sir Peter

included, got stamps in our passports saying "Misbehave prohibited". Kiribati is actually pronounced *Kiribas*. They write "s" as "ti" because the first missionary there lost the "s" from his printing machine.

The population is 80,000 but the country spans a greater distance from east to west than the USA. When the President of Kiribati (his name is Tito, pronounced *Sito*) travels from one side of his country to the other, he needs to fly via two foreign countries.

We stayed on a tiny island called Aranuka, right by the equator. There was no hotel, only a laughably named "government resthouse" without electricity. Sir Peter sat on the verandah overlooking a lagoon, musing calmly on the purposelessness of progress. But the next morning - after what he described as the worst night's sleep of his life - I

heard him blaming the mosquitoes on Mark Twain.

One passport mishap on the trip was having three of our team - including Sir Peter - refused visas to enter the USA, with no reason given. In fact it was a trivial problem regarding work permits, but being a VIP gives you no special treatment.

Having Sir Peter's passport impounded at Durban airport was a similar case. We arrived late at night without onward tickets. The officials said "Sorry, rules are rules", and refused us entry. They let Sir Peter sit in the VIP lounge on condition that he give up his passport. I suppose they thought we were backpackers planning to become a drain on the state.

Jeremy Atiyah

Michael Waldman's four-part series *'Planet Ustinov'* starts on Channel 4 on 23 November.

COMPETITION: LITERALLY LOST NUMBER 55

THIS EXCERPT is taken from a work of travel literature. Readers are invited to tell us: a) where the action is taking place, and b) who is the author?

Blackwell's Bookshops will award £30 worth of book tokens to the first correct answer pulled out of the hat. Answers on a postcard, please, to: Literally Lost, Independent on Sunday, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL. Usual competition rules apply. Entries to arrive by this Thursday.

WE SAT beside a park named after Cervantes, where almost a score of drunks and beggars were lying in the sun, and listened

willy-nilly to an elderly couple conducting a beastly, rambling row only a little short of violence. The woman, presumably a wife and battered, had cuts about the mouth and half-closed, beaten eyes.

When the bells rang out for morning mass, the beggars rose and hurried to the church door, angrily demanding donations from all who entered and railing at the nuns who gave them nothing - who had, perhaps, nothing to give but certainly looked both discomfited and disapproving. Entering was much as one imagines the crossing of a picket line at the height of an industrial

dispute. And there inside, for his Corpus Christi sermon, the priest was gently reminding his tight-lipped congregation, including women in jeans as well as those with covered heads, that there was more to life than the everyday, that we should all be mindful of an eternity we would inevitably encounter.

Literally Lost 54: The action took place in central Africa on the Congo River, in the book *'Heart of Darkness'* by Joseph Conrad. The winner is Andrew Parker of Liverpool.

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"Scusi?"

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CULTURE

FEATURES
MATT DAMON
INTERVIEWHISTORY
A SCOT LOSES
HIS SHIRTCRITICS
IN PRAISE OF
SHOCKERSBOOKS
THE WOLFE
STILL HOWLSCOMMENT
STEAM AGE
READING

History buried by her story



On the set of 'Vanity Fair': It presents the past as a kind of pleasant sideshow got up to entice impressionable TV tourists, relevant only if it can be shown to bear some relation to modern arrangements' NUC

Each November, along with falling leaves and fading light, comes the BBC classic serial. In the old days these were modest affairs (Cranford and John Halifax, Gentleman) beamed out on Sunday at teatime. These days, television having changed in the same way that industry moguls suppose the audience to have done, they tend to be multi-million pound extravaganzas packed with names, snug in the prime-time slots and underwritten by US networks.

They are flagships, too, in a way that probably would not have occurred to the director who put Captain Marryat's *The Children of the New Forest* on the small screen some time back in the 1980s. These, as even the most casual media scrutineer will admit, are edgy days for the BBC, full of ominous defeats and ditherings. In this atmosphere of timidity and shabby populism, the classic serial is often trumpeted as a fail-safe means of proclaiming its ability to deliver the goods in areas where it has traditionally excelled.

One detected something of this anxiety in the publicity that attended *Vanity Fair* (the second instalment of which goes out tonight on BBC1). The advance word was lavish, even by the standards of recent BBC blockbusters: *Radio Times* previews, puffs in half a dozen other programmes, even a "book of the film" (JIM Stewart's 1968 Penguin edition, it transpired, with a reading list 30 years out of date, but brightened up with colour photographs). Everything, inevitably, was shot through with the hankering for "relevance" that characterises any television foray into history, and in particular the idea that Becky Sharp is really a 1990s babe.

I watched *Vanity Fair* with more than usual trepidation. Having spent the past five years working on a biography of Thackeray (published next year by Chano), I feel absurdly proprietorial about him, to the point where even the chance mention of his name in print has me bristling with unease. At the same time, the BBC drama department was kind enough to pay me quite a lot of money to act as "historical adviser" to the present undertaking. It tied me to the production in a rather claustrophobic way ("Brilliant! They did use the burning building... I told them about those hats", and so on.)

Needless to say, and without wanting to offend the people at Television Drama, who were without exception both polite and genuinely interested in Thackeray, I didn't like it. How could I? Every line of rogue dialogue in Thackeray's text to give it "impact" made me flinch. Curiously, though, initial critical opinion (and the audience take-up for that matter – six million viewers is not counted a triumph, these days) seems to have voted the same way. Millions of

What does a historical adviser do when producers ignore his advice? DJ Taylor watches 'Vanity Fair' with heart in mouth

pounds were spent; Natasha Little looks alluring in her nightdress. Miriam Margolyes does old Miss Crawley, and still it hasn't worked. Why?

Inevitably enough, *Vanity Fair*'s drawbacks stem from the shackling together of two very different artistic forms. What should the people who set about conceiving a classic serial be trying to do? Recreate a great novel, or make a decent film that performs respectably in the ratings? As far as one can make out, Marc Munden, the director, wanted laudably to do both, and yet you end up with a sinking feeling that they have done neither. Part of this failing can be ascribed to the particular approach taken to Thackeray's novel. A bit more can be ascribed to the peculiarities of the text, and a lot more – a whole lot more – to the nature of the medium itself.

From the point of view of the original audience, *Vanity Fair* was a historical novel. Published in serial parts between January 1847 and July

of 1848, it tracks back over 30 years in time, and the centrepiece – the Battle of Waterloo – was only a memory to the majority of its initial readers. Aware of this gap and the potential loss of immediacy, Thackeray attempted to bridge it by packing his descriptions of bygone life with detail that was actually contemporary – opening a window for the reader into recent history, but simultaneously reassuring him with familiar props. This subterfuge was deliberate: at one point among his self-penned illustrations the author includes a sketch showing how his characters would "really" have dressed in 1812, as opposed to the garments draped on them in 1847.

Authorial sleight-of-hand presents one kind of problem to a modern TV director, solved in this case by going for a kind of late Regency-vintage compromise. Another comes in the choice of screenwriter. My first exposure to Andrew Davies's particular obsessions came in a discussion of the scene at Vauxhall Gardens where Becky tries to get Jos to propose. "Andrew wants to make it really colourful," the word came back. "Prostitutes rolling on the grass, that kind

of thing." I pointed out that Vauxhall was a middle-class pleasure garden. It cost 3s 6d to get in, for a start – half the average weekly wage of a domestic servant, and Victorian newspapers were full of protests that it was too expensive. We managed to prevent a full-scale re-enactment of Hogarth, but even so, the first episode came crammed with glimpses of Becky in her off-the-shoulder night attire, the girls chatting in their baths – all quite gratuitous, and simply Davies's way of scrawling his signature over the film.

The other problem about Andrew Davies is his propensity to camp it up. No sooner had episode one's rather stilted preliminaries drawn to a halt and Becky been transported to Queen's Crawley than we were lost in a world of Dickensian retainers and general caricature. By the time Miriam Margolyes arrived as Miss Crawley (all pop-eyed exaggeration, in contrast to the dextrous subtlety of the book), *Blackadder*'s shade

of the page is a matter of hints about bare arms and "famous frontal development". We infer her attractiveness, which consequently strikes us harder than Natasha Little's visual come-ons.

A great deal of trouble has been taken to make the film *Vanity Fair* a vehicle for Becky, and rightly so – she is the great anti-heroine of the early Victorian novel, and Thackeray relished her triumphs until the end of his life. ("I like Becky Sharp," he told an American interviewer years later. "Sometime I think I have myself some of her tastes.") It was a pity that the care devoted to correct pronunciation for Regency army officers ("running", "letting", and so on) or constructing Miss Pinkerton's turban couldn't have been expended on persuading Natasha Little to think herself into the part. Nearly all of her gestures and inflections – the knowing looks, the moves to camera – were those of a contemporary actress. The direction compounded this by allowing her to dominate scene after scene. Her arrival at Queen's Crawley, for instance, became a royal progress of introductions and insouciant chat, whereas the real Becky would have been expected to fade discreetly into the background.

These anachronisms are symptomatic of a deeper malaise. All through the film, even more so in the accompanying publicity, lurked the spectre of historical relativism. According to the *Radio Times* feature, for example, Davies believes that Becky is a "strong woman" who would be "very much at home in the 20th century". There is something infinitely depressing about this twich on the historical fast-forward button, conceived in the same spirit that makes people declare that if Dickens were alive today he would be writing *EastEnders*. Becky Sharp is a Regency governess in a 150-year-old novel. Her world is not ours, and our duty to her and her creator, if we wish to imagine it, is to see it in its own terms.

The subtext of the Davies *Vanity Fair* is precisely the reverse of this: all done from the vantage point of 1998 – no world, of course, could be as interesting as the one we inhabit – with the past presented as a kind of pleasant sideshow got up to entice impressionable TV tourists, relevant only if it can be shown to bear some relation to modern arrangements. But the point about the past, by and large, is that it was not like now, and much of its allure lies in the gap. *Vanity Fair* consequently takes its place as a thoroughly up-to-date television artefact, undermined by all sorts of depressing modern orthodoxies about bygone life. Even as I write this, features editors are doubtless planning stories on "Becky Sharps of the Nineties", or asking their male readers if they consider themselves a "Dobbin" or an "Osborne". And it scarcely needs saying that "Sambo", the Sedleys' black footman, has been quietly rechristened Sam.

Kosova children appeal to Independent On Sunday readers

Kosovar children refugees in Albania face cold, hunger and disease as winter nears. Many are in deep shock, having witnessed their parents and relatives killed in the awful atrocities from which they fled. Albania, the poorest country in Europe, has few resources to support the massive influx of refugees.



Your action will help children who have lost everything

The European Children's Trust needs your swift response to set up an emergency centre in Shkoder, northern Albania, to help 2500 refugees. Our centre will provide basic necessities and schooling to give security to the confused and frightened refugee children living in Shkoder.

These are children and families whose homes have been lost, perhaps forever.

Special help is needed for the traumatised children who have witnessed terrible crimes, and must now start to live a normal life.

£30 could buy emergency medicine and food supplements for 5 Kosovar refugee children for a week.

Please send what you can to save the displaced Kosovar children this winter. Call 0800 056 3686 now or cut the coupon below

I enclose £30 (my choice £) to save Kosovar children. (Cheques to The European Children's Trust please). Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card:

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Please return to: Tanya Barron, (IS/IA), Kosovar Emergency Appeal, The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST E88359, 644 Queens Street, London, EC4A 4AR.

Or call 0800 056 3686 NOW.

Please act NOW – your gift will give hope



CULTURE
IN BRIEF

The 'Windhorse' whisper

THE DIRECTOR of a drama about China's occupation of Tibet withdrew his film from the Hawaii International Film Festival (Nov 6-19) on discovering – when his festival programme arrived in the post – that his Golden Maile award nomination had been dropped. Paul Wagner claims that the entry, *Windhorse*, was pushed out by pressure from Peking. Mr Wagner also alleges that festival executive Christian Gaines tried to resolve the matter by offering a "secret screening" of *Windhorse*.

Free Willy pact

TWO RIVAL Norwegian television stations have made a pact to co-operate over the Christmas scheduling of *Free Willy*, the popular film about a captive whale, and its sequel, *Free Willy 2: The Adventure Home*. TvNorge had bought the rights to *Free Willy*, while NRK had done so for the follow up, and planned to show it before TvNorge broadcast the original. Ake Kallqvist of NRK said: "We decided it was stupid to see *Free Willy 2* before *Free Willy 1* and that competition was not in keeping with the message of the movie."

In for a tenor

DAVID RENDALL, the British tenor, was questioned by police after he accidentally stabbed a co-star during a rehearsal in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Rendall was practising a death scene for the opera *Pagliacci*, being staged by the Florentine Opera Company at the Marcus Centre for the Performing Arts, when he injured Kimm Julian, a baritone, with a knife after the blade failed to retract. Julian, playing the lover of the unfaithful wife of Rendall's character, was taken to a nearby hospital where he was treated for a wound to the abdomen.

Domingo heads LA Opera

PLACIDO DOMINGO has been named as the next artistic director of the Los Angeles Opera, a position he will take up when Peter Hennings, the British-born founding head of the company, retires in June 2000. Of his plans for the post Domingo said: "Since Los Angeles is the film capital of the world I hope the giants of the industry will cross the threshold into the world of opera even more so than before."

To boldly sing

WILLIAM SHATNER, the Star Trek actor, who recorded an LP 30 years ago which was deemed one of the worst ever by contemporary critics, has appeared as a guest vocalist on an LP released last week by Ben Folds, an American singer and pianist. Shatner's 1968 album *The Transformed Man* featured spoken Telly Savalas-style versions of "Mr Tambourine Man" and "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds", and achieved cult status.

Oldman to see his fans

THE CAST of Jonathan Stratford's fringe production about three out of work actors, *The Gary Oldman Fan Club*, currently at the Man in the Moon theatre, are to put on a special performance at the end of November for Gary Oldman himself. He heard about the play through Laila Morse, his sister, who met Kevin Heaney, one of the cast, when he recognised her from Oldman's *Nil By Mouth*. The special performance is good news for the cast, who outnumbered their audience on opening night.

Not elementary, Holmes

THE SURPRISE on the shortlist announced Friday for this year's Whitbread Awards was the absence of Richard Holmes's *Coderge: Darker Reflections*, from the biography section. The follow-up volume to his 1989 winner *Coderge: Early Tissues* was edged out by the popular *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire* by Amanda Foreman, *Hilary, 1989-1936 Fabris*, by Ian Kershaw and *Iris - A Memoir of Iris Murdoch* by John Bayley. In the novel category the shortlisted entries were: *The Catastrophist* by Roman Bennett, *Leading the Cheers* by Justin Cartwright and *The Travelling Home* by Barbara Trapido. The front-runner in the poetry category was *Birthday Letters* by the late poet Laureate Ted Hughes. Also contesting the Poetry Award are Paul Farley with *The Boy from the Chemist* and See You and Philip Gross with *The Washing Game*. In the novel category the candidates are *The Restraint of Beasts* by Magnus Mills (the only overlap with the Booker Prize shortlist), *Shopping* by Gavin Kramer, *The Last King of Scotland* by Giles Foden and *Jellyroll* by Luke Sutherland.

The talented
Mr Damon
tries on the
Emperor's
new clothes
for size

At 28 he looks as if he should be in shorts.
Sheila Johnston talks to Matt Damon

There is one person who is not fooled one bit by all this Matt Damon hoopla: who reckons that there are hordes of other people around just as gifted as – if not more gifted than he. She has had ample opportunity to ponder this, having visited Hollywood's latest "It Boy" on the Tuscan locations of *The Talented Mr Ripley* before accompanying him to the Venice Film Festival, where Damon was presenting *Saving Private Ryan* and *Rounders*, a drama set in the world of professional poker players. It is Matt Damon's mum.

"It's my first time in Venice," her son says. "And it feels like the emperor's new clothes: a weird dream state. But it's easy to live with because it doesn't happen often. I don't go to premieres and stuff. I'd rather just go to my local movie theatre. Mum and I have been looking at each other all weekend asking: 'like, what's going on?'"

Damon has lost 25lbs since *Saving Private Ryan* in order to play Ripley, which also has the effect of lopping years off his age. At 28, he looks as though he ought still to be in short trousers. He is charmingly solicitous of his mother, even trying from time to time to bring her into our conversation. He still has the astonished air of someone who can't quite believe all this is happening to him. He told another interviewer he was knocking on wood so hard his knuckles were bleeding. If this is an act, it's a brilliant one, and has everybody fooled.

"The very first big photoshoot I ever did was with Bruce Weber," he says now. "I couldn't believe this guy was taking my picture, so when he told me to get in the bathtub, I just did. It's only now, looking back, that I realise, you don't have to do everything people tell you."

The feeding frenzy is due to Damon's apparent ubiquity: this year alone, he has played the leads in Gus Van Sant's *Good Will Hunting*, Francis Coppola's *The Rainmaker* and John Dahl's *Rounders*, as well as the small but crucial title role in Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*. And somehow or other he has found the time to date a series of high-profile actresses: Claire Danes (his co-star in *Good Will Hunting*) and, currently, Winona Ryder.

Then there is *The Talented Mr Ripley* directed by Anthony Minghella (his first film since *The English Patient*) and co-starring Gwyneth Paltrow and Cate Blanchett. And after that, Damon is already signed to play a young Texan drifter in an adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's *All The Pretty Horses* under the aegis of the actor-director Billy Bob Thornton. "I started *The Rainmaker* in August 1996 and I've been working consistently ever since. It's not like I had some grand plan; I keep getting offered jobs so good I can't say no. I have another year until I'm done and then I'm gonna take a nap."

Dahl sees a link between Damon and

INTERVIEW

the characters he often plays: highly intelligent underachievers who are not altogether sure whether they want to chase after fame and fortune. "Good Will Hunting" came out the first or second week we were shooting *Rounders*, Dahl recalls. "And nobody involved in our film realised it was going to be such a phenomenal success. But I remember going to the cinema to see it and thinking that there was one scene in which he was really terrific." This was the moment in which Damon's character, a maths genius who has dropped out of college to work as a janitor, confronts the psychiatrist, played by Robin Williams, who is attempting to convince him not to squander his gift. In a bid to bond with the recalcitrant rebel, Williams shows him a watercolour he has painted himself. Damon sneers at the picture, as though deliberately to alienate the one man who wants to redeem him.

"He was playing the golden boy, the guy with the talent, who's getting all this advice from all these other people and trying to figure out what to do. So it seemed like he was the right person for the part in my film too," says Dahl. In *Rounders*, Damon jacks in his law studies in order to return to his true love, gambling. "It's interesting that Matt is drawn to this kind of material. In a way it reflects who he is himself."

Damon describes his family as "hippies". His mother, a teacher, had progressive theories about education and wrote a book about toys arguing that they got kids hooked on consumerism and crippled their imagination. Her son remembers only being allowed to play with building blocks as a child. She supported his ambition to become an actor when he told her, rather grandly, that he had decided to "go professional" at the age of 16. He then took a detour into the Ivy League establishment after being accepted at Harvard to read for a degree in English. But after he began winning small roles, notably in Walter Hill's under-rated Western *Geronimo*, he never got around to graduating.

"Everyone told me *Geronimo* was going to be a huge, huge hit and the best thing I could do for my career would be to stay in Los Angeles and keep pounding the pavement, because when it opened everything was going to explode. It was a huge bomb and I found myself stuck in LA with no money."

This went on for a while: as recently as 1995 Damon was still getting rejected for hit parts. "I auditioned for *Curse of the Island* and got turned down – and I'm not talking about the Matthew Modine (male lead) role. As a struggling actor you're not looking for parts that define you, you're just looking for work."

So instead he hooked up with his old friend, Ben Affleck, who, so the story goes, crashed on the couch at Damon's



Goodwill: the script took on 'mythic importance', but did not inspire ruthlessness

BY GRAHAM FARMELO

tiny apartment in a seedy district of West Hollywood. They lived on Ramen Pride (the American equivalent of pot noodles) while thrashing out a script which, they hoped, would give them both the showcase roles they deserved.

"Ben and I would write standing up, improvising and using a tape recorder. We'd play it out and play it out and then look at it all and say, 'OK, where's the story in here?' We're not real writers in the classic sense. Starting at a blank computer screen and a blinking cursor is like torture for me." His mum's belief in building blocks would appear to have worked, even if their working methods were slightly erratic – and it took them a full five years to get the project off the ground.

"I don't think Ben and I were ever really ruthless about selling our script, we

were just determined and driven," he says.

"It took so long to write it and trying to shop it around that a lot of our own identities were wrapped up in it. It took on a mythic importance for us." Their persistence paid off earlier this year when *Good Will Hunting* won them an Oscar for Best Screenplay (as well as a Best Supporting Actor award for Williams and two other nominations, including Best Actor for Damon).

"Selfishly, I remember thinking, 'there goes my small little poker film,'" says Dahl, who originally conceived *Rounders* as a low-budget, independent project in which Damon, an unknown newcomer, would be surrounded by more established actors such as John Malkovich, John Turturro, Edward Norton and Martin Landau. "But everyone was happy for Matt because he's such a great guy

and has worked so hard to get where he has."

"It may be that Damon's niceness will, in the long term, inhibit his range as an actor. Here's what he has to say about Patricia Highsmith's celebrated sociopath: "We wanted Ripley's humanity to come across. In the book he's this awful, calculating person, but Anthony and I tried to have him not ever manipulate anybody and come from a position of pure honesty all the time. He believes what's happening and he believes the world he's indulging in."

But, meanwhile, Matt Damon is charming the media and the fans (he doesn't have time for lunch, but he does stop the publicity juggernaut to sign autographs for some little Italian girls) while his mum frowns and pronounces it all a "symptom of a really screwed up society".

The art of neurology challenges the science of art criticism

You don't have to agree with Constable that painting is a science in accept his conclusion that its pictures are experiments. To get the most out of them, we have always needed good art critics, but we are now entering an era in which our appreciation of art is being given new depth by what might seem like an unlikely profession: brain scientists.

Whenever human beings look at a painting – or do anything else, for that matter – they are using the most complicated object we know of in the entire universe: their brain. Just how the ten billion neurons and the rest of the grey matter between every human pair of ears make sense of the world promises to be a mystery for some years to come, but there's no doubt that neuroscientists are now making breathtakingly rapid progress.

Only last week, the leading science journal *Nature* reported another advance on how we perceive colour. Neuroscientists have long known that colour itself is not out there in the world about us but is "created" in the eye and in the brain. Now two scientists at the University of California have shown that brain cells in our cerebral cortex engage

in continuously dynamic cross-talk to make sense of the light entering our eyes.

Research like this will soon be influencing how we think about painting. Meanwhile, thanks to the enterprise of the National Gallery, we have an opportunity to see the kind of light that well-established science gives to our understanding of art. In Jonathan Miller's fascinating exhibition "Mirror Image", the redoubtable doctor explores how painters use reflections and how we perceive mirror images in art and in the real world.

Miller is at his most engaging best here. By using both his artistic imagination and his formidable analytical skills, he positively teems with insights and helps us to see old pictures with new eyes. In one of my favourite moments in the exhibition Miller analyses Jan van der Heyden's charming *View of the Westerkerk, Amsterdam* (1660), which features houses reflected from the surface of a canal flowing across the foreground. This surface has a sheen which disappears immediately if we block out the houses and leave only the water's surface exposed. What is happening here, Miller explains, is that the sheen is not included in the painting, but is "thought to" the re-

TWO CULTURES?

'Mirrors in Mind' shows
Graham Farmelo that
paintings are experimental

flected image by our sensory system. Remarkably, our brains add something to the picture it sees in front of itself.

Miller delivers analysis like this with his usual engaging didacticism. One price that we have to pay is that the exhibition is decidedly heavy on words, which bombard us from both the labels and the audioguide. Miller's interpretive style is scientific not only in content but also in tone: he is much more direct and literal-minded than is usually thought of in art criticism. This disjunction is, I fear, inevitable whenever scientists comment on art: to be effective, scientists attack their prey, whereas artists stalk it.

You can't help feeling sympathy for Miller: as a scientific polymath, equally at home in the arts and sciences, he has to put up with being continually denigrated by cultural Lilliputians. Even if he has a thick skin, he can't have been best pleased by the reaction to "Mirrors in Mind" of some of the *bien pensant* art critics who have been critical of his style and choice of paintings. Brian Sewell, the London Evening Standard's resident aesthete, dismisses the exhibition with his usual weary condescension. Miller, he sighs, is guilty of follies "not of a fool but of the scientist who knows nothing of the history of art and the sensibilities of painters". He even fears that the exhibition may actually do some harm if some of its visitors "never again look at a painting for what it is but only for what Dr Miller says it is".

Mr Sewell need not fret. I suspect its visitors are far more intelligent than he gives them credit for, and that they will take away from the exhibition insights that will prove valuable whenever they come across paintings that feature mirrors (as Miller demonstrates, there are plenty of them). This is not to deny the importance of the learning and critical skills of the professional art critics: Miller's obser-

vations add to the value of their scholarship and together give us a richer appreciation of art.

It's disappointing to hear that after "Mirrors in Mind" closes on 12 December, it won't be preserved in any form apart from its sumptuous catalogue. An exhibition of this quality deserves to be on display for longer than the regulation three months and to be seen outside London. Perhaps the National Gallery could organise a touring version or, better, make a version of it permanently available through the world wide web? Whatever the exhibition's fate, I believe it will be remembered as a landmark in innovative art interpretation. Miller's meander criticisms may not be aware that they are firing the first salvoes of what promises to be a long battle that will end only when they accept that every painting is an complex experiment on everyone who sees it. If we are to have the most comprehensive appreciation of a picture, we need the views of both professional art scholars and neuroscientists. The art critics' monopoly is – whether they like it or not – coming to an end.

Graham Farmelo is Head of Exhibitions at the Science Museum, London.

JP 11/10/98

BritArt's next big thing

After the Young British Artists, it's time for New Neurotic Realism. Charles Darwent reports

It is hard to know what Anthony Blunt would have made of Martin Maloney's latest painting, a six-by-eight-foot canvas produced for "Die Young, Stay Pretty", the show Maloney is curating at the Institute of Contemporary Arts. On the one hand, the picture, *Hey Good Looking*, is a transcription from Poussin's *The Choice of Hercules*: so far, so Blunt. Maloney is also, like Blunt, scythingly intelligent, intimidatingly well-read, and gay. But the trouble is with the painting itself. The mythological subject-matter and sculptural forms of Poussin's painting trumpet the fact that it is not merely High Art but also about High Art; Maloney's Hercules aims its cultural arrows rather lower. His Hercules, a skinny but impressively bikini-bottomed Boogie Nights extra, chooses between Vice – dressed in a bunny-wool tanktop – and an Alice-banded Virtue, who bears a noticeable resemblance to the young Lady Diana Spencer. ("I made her breasts bigger than I'd meant to," observes Maloney, moodily. "After all, you have to feel there's some genuine element of choice at work.") The tableau is painted in a lurid palette – sunburn pink and ice-cream purple stick in the mind – because, says Maloney, "Poussin's colours were all pretty Technicolor, when you think about it." You can almost hear Blunt wince. What is this all about?

Among much else, it is about the latest thing – perhaps the Next Big Thing, if press handouts are to be believed – in contemporary British art. The 11 artists in "Die Young, Stay Pretty", all hand-picked by Maloney, are being touted as a fully-fledged new movement: self-styled *enfants terribles* who will displace those no-longer-quite-so-young (or affordable) Young British Artists at the top of the international art tree. Five of the "Die Young" artists – David Thorpe, Michael Raedecker, Steven Gontarski, Peter Davies and Maloney himself – will also appear in a series of shows at the Saatchi Gallery, beginning in January. (Maloney's offering will be a 70-foot wraparound sex-room picture which conflates Poussin's bacchanal paintings with his *Seven Sacraments*. Expect publicity.) Always keen on spotting new trends (not to say unmarketed brands), the Saatchi Gallery picked the ICA to the post in summer by publishing a book that included the Maloney "school", presumably in the hope that its title – *New Neurotic Realism* – would stick.

Before we look at the attributes of New Neurotic Realism (hereafter NNR), something of its history. In 1995, Martin Maloney held a series of shows – "Multiple Orgasm", "White Trash" and others – at his flat in Stockwell, London, reinvented as a gallery called Lost in Space. Like the YBAs before him, the 37-year-old Maloney is a Goldsmiths graduate, as are the majority of the Lost in Space artists. The first whiff of fame came when the Karsten Schibert Gallery awarded them their own show ("Die Yuppie Scum") in 1996. This grew to a positive reck when works by Maloney and Davies were selected for the Royal Academy's "Sensation" show of new works from the Saatchi Collection last year.

Handily for Hegelian-minded critics, Maloney has worked out the dialectic of all this. First, he is doubtful about the conventional wisdom which sees the NNRs as an aesthetic antithesis to the YBAs. "I'd been doing this kind of work for three years before anyone picked it up," says Maloney. "There's always a tendency to see one thing in opposition to another, but I don't think our work is a negative reaction to what went before. Ask most of the artists (in "Die Young, Stay Pretty") and they will say that the YBAs were the biggest influence during their time at Goldsmiths. But we can afford to be relaxed in a way they couldn't. You only have



Renaissance man: artist, curator and writer Martin Maloney with his latest painting, 'Hey Good Looking (after Poussin's 'The Choice of Hercules')'

to describe yourself as "British" when you're surrounded by foreigners. They were in the difficult position of having to prove that they were international, sucking in their cheeks and wearing black all the time."

And Maloney also claims the YBAs as a more direct source of inspiration. "However influential they were, there is no point in being the fifth Gary Hume," he notes. "Outside forces dictate that. Leaving the unspoken word 'Saatchi' hanging in the air, Maloney adds, "I was in Cologne recently and I went into this gallery and there were these really whooshy abstract pictures hanging there and I thought, yuck. Then I looked at them again and I thought, well, they're not so bad when you see what they're doing. It's like Blondie was incredibly clever to package that whole blonde siren thing when she was actually an intelligent woman in her thirties. The least expected thing is the thing with most potency."

Cynical? Perhaps a touch. On the other hand, it might be argued that – in an age in which the prime arbiter of good taste in contemporary British art is an *adman* – marketing has become a part of the whole aesthetic experience. Press Maloney on whether New Neurotic Realism really exists and he will say, "No, not really; but then just about everything is marketed with a label these days. People just don't like to see it done with art because it denies the whole Romantic thing. But 'marketing' is just shorthand for 'movement', and

'product' is just shorthand for 'work'. Movement or not, it does at least seem safe to assume that the work in "Die Young, Stay Pretty" is intended to represent a current voice in British art. Whether this is the voice of the *Zeitgeist* or of Martin Maloney (or whether Maloney is the *Zeitgeist*) is a matter to ponder. "I don't see any conflict between being a curator and being an artist," says Maloney. "The majority of time I make things, but I'm also using the skills of an artist in being a curator. This is my

"When BhS begins to look like a minimalist pad, you realise that the Hirst design thing has been overdone"

choice, my taste. It's not a consumable art work in the sense that you can wrap it up and sell it, but the experience is still up for grabs." The inconvenient corollary of this is, as Maloney allows, that "the work (in "Die Young, Stay Pretty") could just as easily be taken out of this exhibition and recast as something else." Given this, the fact that Maloney is a decade older than most of the other artists in his show and that these same artists have a habit

of deferring to his critical opinion, the easiest way of deciphering the voice of the NNRs is through Maloney's own work.

The first thing to be said about Maloney's work is that it is very obviously hand-made. Whether or not you subscribe to Maloney's views on art-historical dialectics, the studied amateurishness of his painting does seem to define its position as the "least expected thing", against the factory-assembled, antiseptic aesthetic of YBAs like Damien Hirst. (There is a wee bit of snobbery going on here: "When BhS begins to look like a minimalist pad, you realise the Hirst-design thing has been overdone," says Maloney.) This wilful hands-on-ness seems endemic to the "Die Young Stay Pretty" team: Dutch-born Michael Raedecker shows it by using embroidery in his paintings. Jane Brennan's flower paintings by the obsessively close-worked quality of their images. The PVC skins of Steven Gontarski's curiously repellent humanoid figures – Henry Moore meets Baron von Frankenstein in the soft furnishings department – are laboriously hand-stitched, playing some sort of unpleasant word-association game with the whole idea of creation.

Also apparently anti-YBA is the fondness of Maloney and his team for suburbia and its supposed beauties. If Hirst's implied world is Notting Hill Gate, David Thorpe's is Peckham, his tower blocks reproduced in elegant cut-paper nightgowns. And Maloney, it seems, is Albert Square. "I usually really just like soap opera," says Maloney. "It's all about

things like, Tiffany's having a baby and Grant doesn't believe it's his. [RIP Anthony Blunt.] It was one of the most difficult things to explain to the ICA, that this show really is about the triumph of suburbia, about its beauty. Beauty wasn't something you talked about much with the YBAs, but it's the only thing I'm interested in now. And I'm not saying that as a 17-year-old looking at Monet, but as someone who could talk about performance art in California in the 1970s. You can approach suburbia either by degrading it or by making something that could fit into it, and that's what I'm doing. It's far more radical to give your granny something she might like than giving her another Donald Duck."

You may, of course, patronise the old lady by doing so, although Maloney thinks not. "Of course, my art is meant for a sophisticated crowd who know," he says. "But it's also got bright colours that anyone can appreciate, so it's a popular cross-over. People say it's *faux-naïf* because it's flat, which really pisses me off. They think you're some kind of retard, when what you're doing is making your painting decorative in a different way. If the legs don't look round, it's because you don't want them to look round. It's been a convention since the 15th century. I know it exists. *Faux-naïf* is tricky: it's Kylie Minogue singing 'I Should Be So Lucky'. My work is not *faux-naïf*. Certainly not *naïf*, anyway."

ICA, SW1 (0171 930 3647): Friday to 10 January. 'New Neurotic Realism' (Saatchi Gallery) is out now.

Gospel, according to Virginia Rodrigues

'I'm black, I'm a woman, and I'm poor.' And she's the strongest voice in Brazilian music. By Jane Cornwell

Virginia Rodrigues is a plump black woman in brown high heels and an orange tent dress. She doesn't look like a star. But Caetano Veloso, one of Brazil's most popular singers, has produced her much-admired album *Sol Negro*, boosting her burgeoning celebrity back home and sparking an international bidding war between David Byrne's Luaka Bop label and Joe Boyd's Hannibal. "I was completely bowled over when I heard her voice," says the victorious Boyd, who chanced upon *Sol Negro* in his slush-pile. "I just sat there stunned."

Virginia Rodrigues was born and raised in one of the hundreds of *favelas* (hillside slums) of Salvador de Bahia. Her modest and irregular training took place in the city's Protestant and Catholic churches, and her style, which mixes the clarity of hymns with the strong, nimble rhythms of her country, is unprecedented. Her influences are equally disparate: samba, jazz, opera, masses and spirituals. Underpinning them all is Candomblé, the religion of her Nigerian ancestors.

Known as the New Orleans and the Havana of Brazil, Salvador de Bahia is a place where African

rhythms and melodies blend with Portuguese influences. Here Rodrigues grew up tripping back and forth between the houses of her *favela*, listening to the music which always drifted from the radio. Her family displayed little musical flair: her late father was a coffee grinder; her mother a cook, cleaner and vendor in the local market. Her maternal grandparents, however, were staunch Catholics blessed with perfect pitch, who sang canticles, Gregorian chant and, when the mood took them, folk songs.

Rodrigues's voice was a gift. "I started singing at four, when I could barely speak correctly," she said (via a translator, and in between mouthfuls of white bread in an East Berlin restaurant). She went on to sing at parties, school assemblies, weddings and local events. Though not raised a Catholic, she was regularly involved in the traditional church processions. "When I was six I remember astonishing my grandfather's friends," she said, "by whipping off the whole of 'La Diana', this long, complex lament normally reserved for much older women."

Rodrigues left school at 12 and worked as a manicurist. There were no music classes at school, she says, wrapping gold-painted nails around a cup of camomile tea, so what was the point in staying? She read books, bought her own clothes and studied piano in the afternoons until the lessons became too expensive. Then, to the chagrin of her grandfather, she turned to evangelical Protestantism. "The music was prettier, the choir spent more time singing and there was a social side," she explains with a shrug. Later, while seeking employment as a domestic, she began performing regularly on a series of low-budget televised amateur talent shows.

"It was frustrating," she says. "I would come in, this poor black singer, with a prepared piece, and they would say it was too difficult for me." She snorts



Mixed salad: Rodrigues's music is influenced by jazz, blues, folk and religion

JOHN MAIER JR

dismissively. "But they were the ones who didn't know the arrangements, or couldn't find the sheet music." Still, for a while it helped the day job: "One woman who had seen me on TV hired me on the spot. She thought it was so cool that her cook was a singer." The Protestant clerics, however, vehemently disapproved of such moonlighting. At the age of 19, Rodrigues went back to singing canticles in a Catholic choir.

The Protestants had also objected to the mysterious Candomblé, which Rodrigues had continued to practise. The Catholics, as descendants

of Nigerian slaves transported to Brazil by the Portuguese, she says, "embrace it because they understand that it's their roots." Rodrigues struggles to find the words to describe the religion, whose rituals involve much drumming, dancing and invocation of deities. "Let's call it energies that flow and fuse – sometimes in a very contained manner, sometimes in a very confused manner. It's very deep, very primordial. Now, if I can't decide on something, I will always lean on Candomblé." Rodrigues never performs without first preparing the stage saluting Ogun, her ruling deity. "He

actually takes care of roads and streets hut, symbolically, he opens the way."

It wasn't until she was cast as a maid in *Bye Bye Pello*, a piece about social inequalities performed by a street theatre company, that she was lifted from anonymity. Rodrigues sang Veronica, the same Catholic capella chant that opened the Berlin show. Caetano Veloso happened to attend a rehearsal. "I heard her singing, and I cried. I was amazed," he said. "I knew she would be a photographic event of great importance."

Far from offering social commentary, the music on *Sol Negro* reflects Rodrigues's sophisticated influences. There are literary songs, jazz-blues numbers and folk songs. She calls it "Brazilian gospel". "I know my singing style is very dramatic," she says, raising herself taller in her chair. "but then many of the songs I choose are lamentations. So when people cry, as they regularly do, it's because of the lyrics as well." Her art, as she prefers to call it, is mindful of both her origins and the universality of music. "It is," she grins, "a mixed salad."

Rodrigues is studying bel canto and lyric singing, and has resumed piano lessons. "Brazil is a country in which moulds and patterns are all important. I didn't fit into any of them. I have always had the will and the passion for music, but at the point when Caetano Veloso discovered me I had little hope left. This has all been a very happy surprise."

For Veloso, *Sol Negro* "is the record Virginia deserves". Given the lack of major new Brazilian stars, it is also one that the country needs. Rodrigues will, with a bit of nudging, admit to accepting the role of ambassador. "I am one of many carriers of many messages," she says carefully. "but I am still what we in Brazil would call an emerging singer." And, she agrees, an unlikely star. "My struggle was complicated by the fact that I am black, I am a woman and I am poor. Three strikes," Rodrigues says, smiling broadly. "But not out."

Virginia Rodrigues: Purcell Room, SE1 (0171 960 4242), Monday.

The Sioux who lost his shirt

Glasgow is under pressure to return a holy relic to its American Indian owners. Cole Moreton investigates

Four days after Christmas, in 1890, hundreds of men, women and children belonging to the Lakota nation of Sioux Indians camped at a creek called Wounded Knee in South Dakota. The Lakota were starving – their crops had failed, their cattle were sick, the buffalo had gone – and they were ready to end the long war against the settlers who had stolen their land. The holy men gave them hope. Dance, and you will become invincible, they said. Wear the shirt that invokes the spirits of your ancestors, and no bullet will enter your body. Dance, and the plains will fill with buffalo again, dead warriors will rise alive, and the white man will sink into the earth.

They were wrong. Wrapped in blankets against the snow, and travelling under a white flag, the refugees were on their way to surrender when the Seventh Cavalry arrived. The soldiers searched the camp and confiscated guns, knives and axes from the exhausted braves, who could hardly resist.

Then a shot rang out. Nobody quite knows what happened. Some say a deaf Indian did not understand the order to give up his gun, others that a medicine man threw dust in the air – a prayer for protection interpreted by the cavalry as a signal to attack. Whatever triggered the massacre, by the time the soldiers stopped firing there were 150 men, women and children dead, and many more wounded. With their bare hands, despite the volleys, Lakota men managed to kill 25 soldiers.

A blizzard swallowed the field, and the wounded were left to freeze. Three days later the troops returned, with photographers, journalists and relic hunters. They threw 350 bodies into a trench, after stripping them for souvenirs that could be sold to collectors.

Years later, man called Black Elk said: "I did not know how much was ended." He was a follower of the messianic Ghost Dance religion, which had spread through the Sioux nation like a prairie fire just before Wounded Knee. It offered hope to defeated people. Only the Lakotas believed that wearing the ceremonial shirt associated with the Ghost Dance made you invulnerable in battle.

"When I look back now from the high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered," said Black Elk. "A people's dream died there." The Indian Wars were declared over soon after, but the Sioux struggle to regain the lost land and identity has continued.

"Our cultures have been stolen but we are still here as a people. We are fighting the same battles that have been fought for 300 years." Those words come from Mario Gonzalez, an attorney who is part Lakota and part Mexican. The remarkable thing is that the battle is continuing at the Kelvingrove Gallery and Museum in Glasgow. Tucked away in an upstairs room, at the far end of this echoing building full of stuffed animals and other Victoriana, is an audiovisual display on Wounded Knee. Its centerpiece is a crucified and tattered calico garment, decorated with tassels and feathers, punctured by bullet holes and stained with blood. This is a Ghost Dance shirt, stripped from a dead warrior on the battlefield. It has been behind glass at the museum for more than a century.

This week Mr Gonzalez will fly to Scotland to win it back. His battle will be fought with courtesy and elegant words at a public hearing on Friday, and the outcome decided at a meeting of the city council a week later. Glasgow may give up the shirt, which will reunite the Lakota with an object sacred to them, but that will put the fear of God into museums all over Britain.

Why? Just imagine what would happen if every group that lost an object of spiritual or cultural significance during the days of Empire demanded it

back. The shelves of our great institutions would empty; not to mention those smaller museums built around the booty acquired by individual travellers.

There are few subjects more likely to make the museum world clam up than repatriation, says Heather Falconer of the magazine *Museums Journal*. Repatriation, the return of objects to the country or culture of origin is a major issue in Australia, Canada and the United States, where an increased awareness of the rights and grievances of aboriginal people has led to new national policies and laws.

Now those who campaign for the Maoris, Aboriginal Australians and Native Americans have begun to look overseas for artefacts they claim were stolen. Strangely, few museums here will admit to having been approached, although groups including the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre made appeals all over Britain. Most museums deal with requests in strict confidence. Those few who have agreed to repatriate objects have done so in secret, for fear of creating a precedent or provoking a flood of new requests. Maurice Davies, deputy director of the Museums Association, says: "It is one of the great taboos to dispose of anything at all in your collection. What is so special about the Glasgow case is that they have chosen to make their decisions in public, in an open and accountable way."

When it became clear the Lakotas would not go away, three councillors were asked to form a repatriation working group and the public was invited to write in. Of 104 letters received from all over the world, only eight were against returning the shirt.

This is the fair and democratic way, says Iain Sinclair, a history teacher on the Isle of Lewis. He made contact with Lakota people while exploring Native American history with his pupils, and is now the official Scottish representative of the Wounded Knee Survivors Association, formed by Lakota descendants of the massacre. "There are similarities between what happened to them and the Highland clearances, in terms of people being victimised and losing their land," says Mr Sinclair.

Unfortunately (for this reading of history) many of the families cleared from the Highlands went to America, where they or their descendants played a full and bloody part in the slaughter of Indians.



The Ghost shirt that warriors believed could stop the white man's bullets

There were Scots in the Seventh Cavalry at Wounded Knee. At a time when Scotland is seeking to reassert its cultural identity, through devolution and the repatriation of objects such as the Stone of Scone, the Lakota request is an awkward reminder that Scots have been conquerors and imperialists as well as victims.

The Kelvingrove Museum has received two other requests. One is from the MP Bernie Grant, on behalf of the Oba people of Benin, seeking the return of bronze altar figures taken by the British Army



Buffalo Bill, for all his reputation as an Indian fighter, got the Sioux Ghost dancers out of jail for his famed Wild West Show

in 1897. At a local level, Central Wishaw Community Council in Lanarkshire wants to be rehired the bones of a man believed to be a member of the 17th century Presbyterian movement of Covenanters.

Mark O'Neill, the head of curatorial services for Glasgow Museums, believes each request must be dealt with separately. "If there was only one ghost shirt in the world and they needed it to tell their history, the case would be unanswerable. There are a few. The Smithsonian Institute in America agreed to give them back seven. On the other hand, it is the only one in Britain with a Wounded Knee provenance, and the only one in Europe. It offers a real connection with a mythic past familiar to us all."

At the hearing Mr O'Neill will put the case for keeping the shirt. "If you listen to the story emotionally, you just say, 'Give it back.' The only argument for not doing so is that it is artificial and naive to do go now out of vicarious guilt for something that happened ages ago. It's not realistic and it doesn't acknowledge the complexities of life."

"How far back do you want to go in applying ethical judgements to history? All the Italian paintings in the great galleries were ripped out of churches. The Lakota have conquered the Black Hills only 50 years before they were conquered by the Europeans. There is a justifiable case for saying that part of the object's history was its arrival in Glasgow, and that the people of this city have some rights to it."

So how did the shirt get from the frozen burial ground at Wounded Knee to a display cabinet in Kelvingrove Park? The answer has been uncovered by Sam Maddra, a postgraduate student at Glasgow University, who says it was brought to the city by a member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

George Crager was a chancer. Born in New York, he lived among the Lakota from the age of 13 and learned their language. He was at Wounded Knee soon after the massacre, as a correspondent for the New York World and a collector of souvenirs. His knowledge of the Lakota gave him access to genuine artefacts and earned him a place on the tour of Europe by William F Cody as Buffalo Bill in 1891. His show included 23 Ghost Dancers who had been released from prison to perform. These strong war-

riors with striking faces and colourful outfits were a big hit in Glasgow. Their interpreter, George Crager, entertained the press with dramatic tales of the Wild West.

Just before the tour moved on, he sold 14 Lakota artefacts to the Kelvingrove Museum for £40, and donated a further 14. They included four items allegedly from Wounded Knee: a war ocellace made of hide and deer hoof; a pair of buckskin moccasins; a cloth and buckskin baby cradle decorated with porcupine quills and brass bells; and the shirt, with a crescent moon painted on the back and a single golden eagle feather on the chest. Crager told the museum it had been blessed by Short Bull, a high priest who had personally visited Wovoka, the Paiute Indian prophet believed to be the Messiah.

No-one can be sure if the artefacts were really taken from the battlefield, although the Lakota themselves are convinced. They did not find out that the shirt was in Glasgow until a full century later, when it was seen by an American lawyer on holiday.

Their first request for repatriation was turned down, partly because it was feared the shirt would be hurried in order to lay the spirit of its dead owner to rest. Then in April 1995 a delegation of Lakotas arrived in Glasgow to negotiate. "They brought an aura of seriousness, which was very impressive," says Mark O'Neill. "They performed a ceremony of blessing or cleansing, they burned grass, and said prayers over the objects. It was very moving."

Now a heritage centre in South Dakota has agreed to display the shirt until the Lakota have their own museum, and the conditions look right for its return. It is hard to argue against someone who claims ownership on the basis of a living spirituality, says Mark O'Neill, but he will try. "I'm persevering, although at least half of me agrees with them. If you believe that museums are an expression of our Western spirituality, there has to be a case made for their preservation. Our own values – of discovery, communication, education, of promoting growth in society by facing the hard things – all have to be defended as valid. We can't just say, 'We're bad people, we'll give it back.' We are trying to find a different answer – one that respects them, and us."

The treasure buried in ancient Acts

The idea that cultural treasure should be returned is not new. "We are the target, if that's the right word, of the most famous request of all," says Andrew Hamilton of the British Museum. He means the Elgin Marbles, a collection of ancient Greek sculptures and fragments brought from the Parthenon in 1801. They were the first authentic classical Greek sculpture to be displayed in London, where they caused a sensation. Unfortunately the Greek government does not accept that the original sale was legal, and has asked for them back. So far the answer has been a polite but firm refusal.

At the British Museum they prefer to call them the Sculptures of the Parthenon. They are particular about language, choosing to use the word "restitution" rather than the more loaded term "repatriation". The museum is crowded with objects of special cultural or spiritual significance to people groups all over the world, but Mr Hamilton claims there are no outstanding requests. That seems remarkable until he reveals that as an international museum it is only obliged to recognise requests that come directly from governments.

Pressure groups and campaigners need not waste their ink. Applications have been received from Maori and Aboriginal Australian representatives, he says, but they were not made by governments so they were "treated differently". Although the case of the Lakota Ghost Dance Shirt had made those in charge of all museums "sit up and think", Mr Hamilton said the outcome would not affect his own institution. The trustees were not about to dismember collections that were best seen as a whole.

In any case, the British Museum Act of 1963 made it illegal for them to dispose of any object at all, from any collection in the museum. "It would take another act of parliament before we could do that," said Hamilton. So that's that, then. CM

Maybe it's because it's the London Film Festival

Dennis Lim picks the ones to watch at an eclectic and intriguing celebration of cinema

The London Film Festival can always be counted on for a representative sample of recent world cinema. The festivals that precede it – Toronto and Venice in particular – can usually boast bigger names and more world premieres, but the expansive, eclectic LFF, now in its 42nd year, consolidates many of their respective highlights into one manageable package. If the 1998 line-up seems slightly lacklustre compared to previous years, that has little to do with the programming (which is as admirably broad-minded as ever) and is more a reflection of the current state of world cinema: undoubtedly strong, but less exciting than a year or two ago.

Even more audience-friendly than before, this year's LFF has been decisively streamlined, with just over 150 features, a good 30 to 40 fewer than last year. This is, according to festival director Adrian Wootton (in his second year at the helm), in response to extensive industry and audience research. The programme has also been significantly revamped. The British Cinema strand remains, but the rest of the world is now represented by Cinema Europa and World Cinema. This mercifully does away with the American Independents, an increasingly weak section in the last few years. (On the other hand, the absence of an Asian Cinema category – in light of the region's continued creative vitality and especially after last year's exceptionally strong selections – seems like

a miscalculation.) This year's festival opened last Thursday with a smallish, homegrown crowd pleaser (*Little Voice*) and closes next week with an unusually thought-provoking Hollywood satire (Warren Beatty's well-meaning but muddled-headed *Bulworth*). And here, a guide to the highlights (please note, these films have not yet received certificates from the British Board of Film Classification):

The Apple (Thursday): An unemployed man and his blind wife keep their twin daughters locked up in their Tehran home; only after neighbours and social workers intervene are the girls allowed contact with the outside world. A fascinating first film by 18-year-old Samira Makhmalbaf (daughter of director Mohsen), *The Apple* is a quasi-documentary re-enactment of a true story. As in Abbas Kiarostami's *Close Up* (one of the great works of recent Iranian cinema), the characters are all played by their real-life counterparts.

Buttoners (Friday & Saturday): This ingeniously plotted black comedy by the young Czech director Petr Zelenka plays like a smarter, funnier, decidedly more demented version of Jim Jarmusch's

Night on Earth. Consisting of six intricately interlocked episodes (the first set in Japan on the night of the Hiroshima bombing, the remaining five exactly 50 years later in Prague), the film has a surreal streak, a heightened sense of irony and a bold satirical edge.

Central Station (18 & 19 November): Winner of the Golden Bear for Best Film at this year's Berlin film festival, this panoramic Brazilian road movie explores the unlikely relationship between an embittered former schoolteacher (the wonderful Fernanda Montenegro) and a street urchin in search of his long-lost father. The bearstring-tugging gets a little too blatant at times (a nomination for Best Foreign Film Oscar is virtually guaranteed), but there's no denying director Walter Salles's deep-seated humanism, which, at its most affecting, echoes that of the great neo-realist films.

Festen (Friday & Sunday 15 November): Along with Lars von Trier's *The Idiots* (also showing in the festival), this film by Thomas Vinterberg is the first to emerge from "Dogme 95", a collective of presumably loopy Danish filmmakers centered around von Trier and guided by "the Vow

of Chastity", which consists of 10 strict yet hilariously random tenets (among them, "shooting must be done on location" and "genre movies are not acceptable"). *Festen* takes place at a family gathering punctuated by one bombshell after another. The movie's shock value is considerable, but it mainly feels like the work of an inveterate prankster, one with a slightly warped mind and a flair for camera trickery.

First Love, Last Rites (today): This unusually gimmick-free American indie is based on a 12-page Ian McEwan short story about the psychic fallout of a teenage love affair. Not obvious movie material, but director Jesse Peretz turns it into a remarkably resonant first feature. He transposes the story from an English seaside town to Louisiana bayou country, and with subtlety and precision, invokes the feverish confusion of young love. Giovanni Ribisi gives an understated, complex performance as one half of the smitten couple, and New York trio Shudder to Think, who did a couple of stand-outs on *Venet Goldmine*, come up with a winning, imaginative soundtrack.

I Stand Alone (Tuesday & Friday): Lars von Trier's explicit *The Idiots* is already causing a pre-festival

stir (it features an erect penis and graphic sex), but it's Gaspar Noé's unrelentingly brutal film that'll have audiences gasping if not running for the exits. One of the baseliest movies in recent memory, *I Stand Alone* is like a much, much sicker *Taxi Driver*, it's set within the fractured psyche of its ferociously misanthropic protagonist, a French butcher who always seems on the brink of a murderous explosion. Watching it is an intense experience, to say the least. Noé employs shock cuts, intertitles, loud gunshots as sudden sound effects, and a hate-fuelled stream-of-consciousness voiceover. The film is something of a stunt, to be sure, but its despair and abjection feel horribly real.

Out of Sight (Thursday, Friday and Sunday 15 November): The sort of movie you thought Hollywood didn't know how to make any more. Steven Soderbergh's return to big-budget filmmaking is an Elmore Leonard adaptation that puts both *Jackie Brown* and *Get Shorty* to shame. Romantic, sexy, generous, light on its feet, and seductive, *Out of Sight* is a busy crime caper whose strength lies in vivid characterisations. Soderbergh has somehow persuaded George Clooney, the film's bank-robbing anti-hero, to abandon the coy, head-ducking routine that passes for acting in his book, and turn on a completely revelatory leading-man charm.

LFF box office: 0171 928 3232, to 19 November.

THE CRITICS

FILM STUDIES

Last Saturday night, here in San Francisco, our four-year-old and our nine-year-old planned strategy. The kid was dressed as a '49er, the older brother as a werewolf with a screw in his arm and a raw, rubber heart that had hurt through his shirt. This year, this Halloween, they were ready for the big one: they would trick-or-treat in the Sea Cliff district, the posh residential area west of the Golden Gate, where the wind and the fog come in fit for *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. They would hit Robin Williams's house, famous for its inventive treats. So we drove to Sea Cliff, and all the way there were bands of fairies, spirits, ghouls and *Scream* masks – and we never touched the Castro, the gay part of town, where there would be 100,000 partygoers on the streets in costumes that make *Velvet Goldmine* look like a Huddersfield Rep version of *Mother Goose*. It was hard to park at Sea Cliff, and the streets were as packed as if a football crowd had just got out. Of course, it was kids and parents, as well as a few teenage gangs – and the costumes went from Beardsley to Beowulf. The

candy industry's stunning exploitation of Halloween has now been matched by shops that will gear you up for the strange night.

The mood was cheerful and festive, and the throng at the Williams house was coming away with pretty, illuminated wands – trust Robin to save the kids' teeth, while adding to safety and visibility. There was a team of young women at his house like production assistants on a movie – giving out the goodies. But no sign of Williams himself. Of course, he could have been disguised as one of the ghouls. Jeffrey Dahmer and Adolf Hitler might have been prowling those streets, with their bloody jaws drooping. If you ever wanted to off someone spectacularly, Halloween is the night to do it. You could Norman Bates your own mother – the blood could wash away the crisp autumn leaves – and everyone would think it was an act, a stunt, part of the show. I know one nine-year-old who would find that pretty "cool".

This kind of knowingness prevails and pacifies in modern horror film, above all in the *Scream* pictures, and in that other modest franchise, the



DAVID THOMSON

latest stage of which is called *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer* – with the unwitting footnote that we're still likely dumb enough to pay \$7.50 to see it. So far, so good: you can maintain a world-weary smile for such follies. Now, let me tell you that, this Halloween in America saw the opening of *Bride of Chucky*, the fourth in the *Child's Play* series. One review says it is "clever, inventive and ghoulishly funny!" But who's laughing in Britain after the neezy knowledge that Chucky pictures may have inspired the killers of James Bulger?

Don't get me wrong. I concede the possibility that seeing *Child's Play 3* played some part in that grisly event; I am prepared to credit the chance that years ago in the hinterland Lee Harvey Oswald saw that old Frank Sinatra movie, *Suddenly*, and never got it out of his head; twist my arm, and I'll even allow that Joanne Dru in *Red River* may have given me an absurd longing for women who talked and acted like hipsters. But I am not calling for the banning of any of those films – or any types of film.

Still, being out on the streets of Sea Cliff this Halloween made me wonder how the day and its meaning have shifted. Sixty years before, Orson Welles spooked a lot of Americans with *The War of the Worlds* on radio – 60 years plus a day, actually. There were plenty of people who knew that was a sly, clever tease (a Wellesian genre), but some were so persuaded they packed up house and drove for the hills.

Halloween was scary once – the way it is in what is still the best movie treatment of the night, the episode in which Margaret O'Brien dares to challenge the local ogre in *Meet Me in St Louis*. It

is terrifying in *Cur People* (1942), when the hus comes into frame and the opening doors make their hissing sound. Do you recall the outrage, the sense of seeing something so visceral, so fantastic, it ought to be impossible, when the creature came out of John Hurt's chest in *Alien*? Or how at the end of *Carrie*, the whole audience jumped when the arm reached out of the cinderly grave? Do you still see the blurred outline of a human form through your shower curtain?

Today, horror films have less kick, less shock – is that because no one knows how to deliver it, or because the teen audience is so blasé about the game? Have we forgotten that Halloween is about souls? I don't know the answer, but I regret the loss.

I'd like to see our nine-year-old decently shaken up – because that's a way of believing in movies. As it was, last week in Sea Cliff, he was the only chiller. In his werewolf garb, he went up the steps of one house where the owner sat with a turban of candy and a handsome, composed black Labrador. At the sight of my son, the dog shrank back into the safety of the house and the light of its TV.

Just an extraordinary Joe



MATTHEW SWEET
CINEMA

My Name is Joe (15)
Antz (PG)
Snake Eyes (15)
Girls Town (15)
The Players' Club (18)

That Ken Loach. He isn't very New Labour, is he? Not very *Full Monty*, either. Getting naked to the tune of "You Sexy Thing" wouldn't help the hero of his new film. Joe's story is harder, darker, more cognisant of what poverty is and does than the sentimental tales of amateur strippers and colliery bands that have recently spun social deprivation into box-office gold. There is certainly humour, melodrama and romance in Loach's latest slice of dirty socialist realism, but don't expect any sight-gags with garden gnomes.

Joe (Peter Mullan) is 37, a recovering alcoholic who's been gnawed up with guilt since he drunkenly punched his ex-girlfriend into casualty. Despite the effects of long-term unemployment and cheap vodka, he's succeeded in reinventing himself as a pillar of his local community, a run-down estate in Glasgow. He manages a disastrously incompetent amateur football team and is helping his friend Liam (David McKay), a former heroin dealer, to keep clean and pay off his debts to a loan shark. Much to his surprise, Joe also finds himself falling in love with a social worker (Louise Goodall), an affair that Loach brokers with winning sweetness.

But Joe's acute sense of responsibility is also his downfall. Unable to stand by and watch Liam get his legs broken Joe shoulders some of the debt himself, and is soon doing drug-runs for an unsavoury gang boss. The story makes simple, direct points, showing how easy it is to get into debt when you have no job, and how a bad debt to the wrong person can yield desperate and violent consequences. For the protagonists of *My Name is Joe*, a payment of £1,500 – the cost of the PC 1m cheerfully typing this on – is the difference between life and death.

Loach's protagonist is a 1990s equivalent of Victorian working-class heroes like Dickens's Stephen Blackpool or Gaskell's John Barton: proletarian good guys whose integrity is undermined by the degrading effects of poverty. It is difficult not to idealise such figures into minor sainthood, but Loach and Mullan conspire to make Joe more than an exemplar of the deserving poor. Paul Laverty's script gives its hero a love of Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D, then reveals that he nicked it from a record shop: the classical tape was the only one he couldn't flog down the pub. And Mullan's deceptively ordinary performance avoids obvious heroics. Joe is a mass of complicated kindness and frustrated rage; superb acting without a single false note.

You go to a Ken Loach movie expecting to learn something, but he also loves to tease you with wry touches that suddenly suggest you're watching Ealing comedy. It's a humour that develops out of the enterprising cheeriness that Loach's characters need in order to stay sane, and the best example of it is the sequence in *Raining Stones* in which Ricky Tomlinson and friends steal the turf from the lawn of the Conservative club. *My Name is Joe* has lots of this material: there's a hilarious scene in which Joe and his mate Shanks (Gary Lewis) take on a wallpapering job and – discovering that it is beyond their meagre expertise – unleash a storm of plausible oohing and aahing about subsidence. It's sharper stuff than the mix of farce and sentimentality that made *Brassed Off* and *The Full Monty* such big hits. *My Name is Joe* will break no box-office records, but there's truth in every frame of it.

Woody Allen got dressed up as a sperm for *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex... Now CGI* technology has allowed him to become a therapy-addicted hymenopterian insect for Eric Darnell's *Antz*, a spectacular political parable set in a totalitarian anthill. Allen provides the voice of Z-4195, the neurotic Everyman of his colony, a six-legged equivalent of



Great expectations: Peter Mullan is the would-be hero in Ken Loach's 'My Name is Joe'. It won't break box-office records, but there's truth in every frame of this magnificent piece of dirty realism

D-503 in Zamyatin's *We*. In the tradition of such dystopian narratives, he escapes into an unregulated outside world and discovers that just because he has an exoskeleton, he doesn't need to live like an invertebrate. He receives charity from a pair of WASP-ish wasps, flees from hordes of termites quite as terrifying as the *Bugs* in *Starship Troopers*, and finds love with another ant (voiced by Sharon Stone) who is much more attractive than him. Yes, even

refreshing change of perspective.

Brian de Palma's new thriller, *Snake Eyes*, has something important to say. "Watch me, I'm Brian De Palma See how I keep my Steadicam up for 20 minutes without a cut! See how I leap over doorframes and peer through ceilings!" And indeed he does: images swoop and pitch and yawl, the gaps between cuts get longer, the screen splits in two and alters in shape to meet the narrative's demands. De Palma is – and has in the past been – highly successful in his attempts to push the visual grammar of modern film noir beyond its reliance on rather knackered pastiche, and you only have to watch recent genre efforts like *Palmetto* or *This World Then the Fireworks* to see what a class act he is.

Though you could believe De Palma's camera was some electronically-augmented spider monkey, there's a flat-packed obviousness about nearly everything else in his film. The plot is some half-digested conspiracy story involving missile systems and a heavyweight boxing champion, about which Jean Claude Van Damme might have had second thoughts. The detective hero, Rick Santoro (Nicolas Cage) uses the expression "sexy lady" without any visible irony. The villain says "negative" instead of "no" to show how calculating he is, and gives a detailed explanation of his plans, complete with extravagant hand movements.

Even the restless camera sometimes falls prey to this tendency. When Rick goes through a moral dilemma about accepting blood money, de Palma has Cage stare at a bloodied \$100 bill lying on the carpet. Big shot of Nick Cage's anguished Lisa Minnelli eyes. Big shot of stained money. Another big shot of Cage angling at the Axminster. Considering the technical virtuosity, you can only wonder what went wrong. Maybe someone forgot to recharge the monkey.

Jim McKay's *Girls Town* is also kicking up against a few generic categories: it's a rape-revenge coming-of-age movie set in a New Jersey school. As one of the characters remarks, "90210 it ain't." *Grange Hill* meets *I Spit on Your Grave* it is. The story

– three young women (Anna Grace, Brunklin Harris and Lili Taylor) go on a crusade against men who have abused them – is a promising one, but the script, workshopped by the director and his three leads, fails to flesh out the issues it raises, and is almost completely reliant on repetitious slanging matches.

There's a desire to make social comment buried somewhere deep inside *The Players' Club*, rapper-actor Ice Cube's comic fable

about Diana (Lisa Raye), a student who puts herself through college by taking a job in a strip joint. According to the press notes, the movie tells the story of "one woman's struggle to escape from its explosive and unstable environment". Fortunately, this also allows Cube to pump up the corny soft porn. His interest in the heroine's breasts certainly outweighs his interest in her life and aspirations: he can't be bothered to give us anything but the most lazy dialogue

about Diana's desire to be an investigative journalist, but he does invest plenty of energy in her *Dynasty*-style bitch-fight with an evil lesbian stripper called Ronnie (a monstrously sour Chrystale Wilson).

There is, however, one moment of plucky comment in the film: a scene in which Wilson, in dominatrix mode at a secret policeman's ball, pulls down an officer's trousers and spansks his bottom. "One more time for Rodney King!" she howls. Ouch.

TOGETHER
THEY SHARED
A BURNING SECRET

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...with radiant
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"A remarkably tender
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Masha, Tasha, Irina, Charles

I didn't look as if this *Three Sisters* was going to work. The auditorium of the Birmingham Rep is on a steep slant. Hayden Griffin, the designer, presents the drawing room and dining room of the Prozorov household on two rafts, without walls, and with a cloudy skycape behind. Susan Woodbridge's Olga begins by telling her sister, in a muted sing-song tone, that it was 11 years ago that they left Moscow. From Row K, we might have been on the deck of a ship, watching people on the quayside.

In this open space, it's tricky to control changes in mood. So Bill Bryden's production doesn't offer the vertiginous shifts in atmosphere achieved in Max Stafford-Clark's recent *Out of Joint* production. At a full three hours, the brusque insensitivities, as one point of view bumps up cruelly against another, become less pronounced. But, this *Three Sisters* exerts its force thanks to the sharply individualised performances: as distinct as the black, grey and white dresses worn by the sisters. Without leaving the town, Bryden's cast go on eventful journeys.

Of course this is *Three Sisters* and One Sister-in-Law. Eve Matheson's Natasha is suitably glibly, talking incessantly about her children. To be fair, it's not as if any of her three sisters-in-law help her out with the childcare. Felicity Dean's brooding Masha spends most of the evening in a horizontal position, curling up with a desperate clinginess in the final act.



ROBERT BUTLER

THEATRE

Three Sisters

Birmingham Rep

Britannicus

Albery, WC2

Ugly Rumours

Tricycle, NW6

Rachel Pickup is a glamorous, spirited Irina: it's some provincial post office that has her behind the counter.

Charles Dance is best known as a TV and film actor. His courteous and imposing Vershinin looks caught uneasily between his instinct for naturalness and the need to hit the volume. The glowering presence of Jasper Britton's Solyony cleverly suggests the turmoil of a man who can't help his rudeness. All the performances grow. When the play moves outdoors, and the two-dimensional birch trees fly in, the cast take command of the airy stage. I hope this production transfers to London. It might find a better home.

Harold Wilson wasn't reading his Racine when he said that a week was a long time in politics. When you're observing the classical unities, a day's an awful long time. At the end of *Britannicus*, the second Racine tragedy triumphantly presented by the Almeida in the West End, Nero's tutor Burrus, played with aquiline cragginess by David Bradley, says: "I have

already lived a day too long."

We have just heard of the death of Nero's half-brother (a passionate Kevin McKidd). Junia, his love (a fraught and fragile Joanna Roth), whom Nero wants to marry, has taken refuge in the temple. The Roman mob has killed Britannicus's tutor (the devilish courtyard John Glover). With Nero half-crazed, and his mother awaiting her death, it hasn't been what journalists would call a slow news day.

Robert David MacDonald's forceful and nimble version retains the alexandrine hexameters. Jonathan Kent's thrilling production, more successful than his first, keeps the deceptions, passions and power politics absolutely in focus. Maria Björnson's grand apartment design combines the world of Louis XIV with that of the present day. When Barbara Jefferson's Albia enters, she switches on the lights. To one side, there are two fish tanks. Behind these, later on, Toby Stephens's Nero can be seen eavesdropping in a sickly glow.

As Nero's mother Agrippina, Diana Rigg gives her best performance since *Mother Courage*. In a sparkling two-piece and pearls, she switches cigarettes in her fingers with impatience or snaps open her handbag to fish out a hankie. She's wonderfully pointed, articulate and modern. Putting on her warmest maternal tones, she schmoozes her demonic son: Mother Cunnin.

Stephens mixes cold sarcasm with a childish awkwardness. His fingers paw at his palm: his knees stick together when he



Family values: Charles Dance (Vershinin) and Felicity Dean (Masha) in Bill Bryden's new production of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*

NORMAN CLARK

sits down. His greased-down hair gives him a tyrant's puppy fat. He finds moments of exquisite tension: when he pauses, a chill runs through the audience as if he might have forgotten his lines. There's only a hint of the lip-curling, double-breasted villain that Rik Mayall gives us with Alan B'Stard.

Thanks to Rory Bremner, John Bird, John Fortune, Harry Enfield and *Private Eye*'s St Albion parish newsletter, we know what the jokes about New Labour are: Tony is preachy; Gordon is hitler; the two of them hate each other;

everyone sucks up to Murdoch; spin-doctors control every speech; they are all conservatives; and nothing has changed. What can theatre add? At the Tricycle, Tariq Ali and Howard Brenton's satire *Ugly Rumours* takes its title from Blair's rock band at Oxford. It's half-way between a student revue and a Christmas pantomime. We meet Tony-baby, Cherry-pop, Gordon Macduff and two spin-doctors, Polly Mendacity and Charlie Farrago. Rupert Murdoch has a koala bear; Richard Branson is Biggles; and the ghost of John Smith rattles the chains of

compromise. An insight into the authors' minds: the wicked spin-doctors are sexy and elegant women who work out at the gym. A natural boulevard comedian, Neil Mullarkey plays Blair with a tentative alertness - nice and ineffectual - that suggests he ought to have been playing John Major. He's well contrasted with Gordon Kennedy's rumpled bassett hound of a Gordon Macduff. Sylvia Syms doubles up wittily as Mrs Thatcher, a crazy cowbushy figure living in the cellar of Number 10, and Mrs Windsor, a keen gardener with green

wellies and a hand outstretched for a whisky. The authors' main thrust is that focus groups are replacing democracy. If most satire has an energy that makes its targets larger than life, this slack, brittle affair does the opposite. Ali and Brenton clearly knew what they thought about this lot before they started. It's teacherly and condescending. They luxuriate in their dislike of New Labour. Consequently they never land a decent punch. A strong sense of hurt and resentment comes off the stage; not between Gordon and Tony,

but between those in power and those - older people in Old Labour - who aren't. So, had news then for William Hague. The only people who might enjoy this show are Blair and Brown themselves. If this is the worst that can be thrown at them, they could be the first to have a good laugh.

Three Sisters: Birmingham Rep (0121 236 4455), to 21 November. *Britannicus*: Albery, WC2 (0171 369 1740), in rep to 12 December. *Ugly Rumours*: Tricycle, NW6 (0171 328 1000), to 28 November.

The other Scandinavian symphonist

There's no particular reason to expect composers to look like their work - and most of them don't - but I'm always struck by the dissimilarity between the physical appearance and the output of Carl Nielsen. Spiky-haired and pug-dog cute, with eyes that look as though they're summing up the possibility of scaling apples from a tree: you see it in his photographs and wonder where on earth that big-boned, elemental, "life-force" music came from.

In a sense, of course, we know exactly where it came from. When Nielsen's 3rd Symphony had its premiere in Stuttgart in 1913, a German critic hailed it as "a mighty, animating call from the North". But then, Nielsen spent much of his life in Copenhagen, which considers itself the Mediterranean playground of Scandinavia. And no doubt there were nights in the Tivoli gardens that contributed to the assured good humour which accompanies the "call" and marks out Nielsen's work as something of a different order to the bleak severity of that other Nordic giant, Sibelius.

That Sibelius was an exact contemporary has always been a problem for the two composers. They appeared like rivals, forcing listeners to make a choice; and initially, the world outside Denmark chose Sibelius. But in recent years, a serious Nielsen industry has grown up - in the recording studios, at least. The frequency of live performance has not been so startling, although there was a Rattle cycle in Birmingham and London a few years ago. And in Glasgow, all six symphonies have just had a high-profile outing courtesy of the BBC Scottish SO under its conductor Osmo Vanska.

To the ears of Glasgow concert-goers, Vanska has been something of a "call from the north" himself: a Finn who came to international prominence through fine Sibelius recordings with the otherwise unheard-of Lahti Symphony. He took charge of the BBC Scottish SO in 1996, when the orchestra was in poor shape after several years with the wayward Jerzy Maksymiuk. Almost immediately, things began to look up. There was a new discipline, a new vision. And, although the orchestra remains a patchy ensemble - strong in some departments, weak in others - joins have been conspicuously girded. Vanska has initiated some big projects in recent seasons: cycles of Sibelius and Beethoven, with this Nielsen series following suit.

That the concerts have been taking place in Glasgow's City Hall hasn't been ideal. The flock, raw, in-your-face acoustic you can't. But the playing has been strong and energetic. If sometimes too short-winded to bring off the soaring aerial ascents that Nielsen asks for, And Vanska certainly knows what he's dealing with in this extraordinary music. Nielsen was a one-off: he belongs to no school. Although three generations of critics have categorised him as a classicist - citing the clear, transparency of his scoring, the insistent ostinatos, the assertive counterpoint - there are Romantic traits as well. The rush of blood that surges periodically through his orchestra is to the heart not to the head. It has to be accounted for, and Vanska does so - with a sure feel for the "current" that connects Nielsen's ideas together. These were held,



MICHAEL WHITE

CLASSICAL

Carl Nielsen series

Glasgow City Hall

John Adams: 'Century Rolls'

LSO, Barbican, EC2

John Tavener: 'In the Month of Athyr'

Tallis Scholars, National Gallery, WC1

exhilarating readings that place Vanska in the class of specialist interpreters. He touched the greatness of these symphonies. And they are great. In the entire symphonic repertoire, I can't think of a more inspiring work than Nielsen's 4th: numbers 3 and 5 belong with the immortals too. I hope this Glasgow series - every concert with a national broadcast - will have telegraphed that fact into the minds (and hearts) of British audiences.

The London Symphony has for a long while had a hot-line to America, maintained by André Previn, Leonard Bernstein and Michael Tilson Thomas. Out of it has come a special friendship with John Adams, who is arguably the most successful composer in the US today, and the only American minimalist who knows what to do with an orchestra when he's

offered one. Last Sunday he was at the Barbican, to conduct the LSO in the British premiere of his new Piano Concerto, with the soloist Emmanuel Ax. And it turned out to be an attractive piece that aims to please: accessible, jokey, and fun, with optional complexities for ears that want to take it further. The jokes begin upfront, in the name Adams has applied to the piece: *Century Rolls*, after the rolls of perforated paper that used to drive player-pianos. It suggests an image of the ghosts of keyboard writers of the past, raised mechanistically and lured into the present. And the way Adams turns that into music strikes me as a counterpart to how the Mormons spontaneously baptise long-dead people into their religion. Adams is musically baptising Copland, Satie, Ravel, Stravinsky and others into minimalism. And however he resists the label, this concerto is a fundamentally minimalist piece - complete with running ostinatos and a strong, insistent pulse, albeit overlaid with syncopated rhythms which distort your sense of where the pulse is coming from.

As usual with Adams, though, this is a piece that gets the better of minimalism (with most composers it's the other way round) and does more than merely rob you, drug-like, of a sense of time. There is a core of substance to it. But there isn't a truly virtuosic role for Mr Ax, who tends to roll on with the orchestra rather than stand against it. But perhaps that's not, these days, the alpha and omega of concerto form.

John Tavener also unveiled a new piece this week: an unaccompanied choral setting, *In the Month of*

Athyr. It's much like all the other Tavener choral settings except shorter (no bad thing, without his endlessly repeating verse/refrain device that teases four minutes' music into 24 minutes' duration) and with the stronger, denser harmonies he used more often in the past than now. That may well be because the piece commemorates an old relationship with the Tallis Scholars, who were championing Tavener before he became a cult figure and have continued to make him their sole incursion into modern repertoire. Just about everything else they sing is Renaissance polyphony. And of course, they do it very well, with a discography whose rich, impressive sound positions them as something like a Berlin Philharmonic among British choirs.

But that's their problem: they are creatures of the microphone. And in the flesh on Tuesday they were disappointing: bland, unvaried, unexciting, in a programme that should have been special because it marked their 25th anniversary. The whole thing was miscalculated. It took place in the dry, atmospheric National Gallery, with the audience dispersed through various rooms - largely remote from the performers who were evidently singing for their sponsors. The rest of us seemed there merely to make up numbers - and to celebrate the presence (distantly) of Sting, who had been booked to narrate (badly) a handful of spoken words in the Tavener. With so little to do, he was brought back at the end to join the Scholars in an arrangement of one of his own songs. As the culmination of a programme of Renaissance masters it was tacky, downbeat, and what politicians call a Serious Lapse of Judgement.

It's a nice show, but where's the ballet?



JENNY GILBERT

DANCE

Royal Ballet Triple Bill

Sadler's Wells, EC1

Richard Alston 50th birthday

Queen Elizabeth Hall, SE1

But perhaps that money needs to go towards longer preparation time, not just the icing on the cake.

To be fair, almost anything would look like Instant Whip when set beside *The House of Bernarda Alba*, Kenneth MacMillan's 1963 ballet based on Lorca's play. Every step is worth a page of prose. In 25 minutes MacMillan develops not only the acrid central plot, but fleshes out each of the five cooped-up sisters and their damsel-mother. Single, stark gestures sear themselves on the mind: a pawing at the ground like dressage ponies, a craning and ducking of the head that suggests both girlish bashfulness and preening. No one moves from A to B without a reason; no one flounces a skirt without motive. The effect is riveting, although the lighting was too dim to do justice to Nicholas Georgiadis's

set, and on the night I saw it, they fluffed the climactic revelation of the hanged girl.

Nureyev's version of *Raymonda*, Act III, is rich with steps, too, but in this case it's dancing for dancing's sake. Audiences love this extract for its gilded set and costumes, but also as a technical showcase. But out of the six solo variations, only spunky Laura Morera really flung herself into the party spirit, and the massed Hungarian Dances was miserably lacking in Magyar swagger. It was left to Dancer Russell to fulfil the ballet's eastern promise with her arch little stampings and handclaps, and a sensuous, almost languid drag in the body. Her partner, Igor Zelensky, who was almost born dancing this stuff, took all his fences like the thoroughbred he is, but looked oddly unengaged.

There was no room for party poopers at the Dance Umbrella show to celebrate Richard Alston's 50th last weekend. The Q&A was packed to the rafters to honour this long-serving kingpin of British contemporary dance, and the programme - with Alston pieces dating from the 1970s to the present - fully justified the love and esteem in which he's held. Best was a medley of linked extracts which unwittingly came as a reprimand to those critics (myself included) who have sometimes doubted the strength of the work. Why, when it failed to make an impact then, does it look so good now? It could be that Alston's very English qualities have simply weathered the short-lived fads that have sometimes looked more exciting. Or it could be that Alston has identified all the most successful elements in his work and presented them afresh. Whatever, it was wonderful. On with the medley.

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The coolest people in these postmodern times are often those who should, by all sane standards, be very uncool indeed. People like Jarvis Cocker and Beck - fashion icons who are so devoted to ill-fitting clothes that even their socks are the wrong size - or Abba and Tom Jones, who have been on the irony conveyor belt for so long they have travelled from uncool to cool-in-inverted-commas to cool.

Where are Air on this conveyor belt? The duo of Jean-Benoit Dunckel and Nicolas Godin would have been risibly uncool a few years ago. The squelchy Moogs and jazzy easy-listening textures on *Moon Safari* (Source) would have been banished to a muzak tape, especially as the album booklet is decorated in Seventies comic strip designs, and the duo's best known track is called "Sexy Boy". Besides, Air are French. We can't take them entirely seriously, can we? Apparently we can. *Moon Safari* came out in January, and it's still got a place reserved on most critics' Albums of the Year lists, simply because its retro-futurism is so fluid and uplifting that it transcends kitsch. No other record makes machines sound so warm and organic.

At the Theatre Royal last Sunday, someone put the irony conveyor belt in reverse. Dunckel and Godin and their band were dressed in matching Persil white T-shirts and trousers. The first notes of the evening were the motif from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* played on a bank of synthesizers by a man

The men from Uncool

with very long, lank hair. I had to glance at my ticket stub to check that I hadn't accidentally gone to a Hawkwind concert in 1974.

Things went from the ridiculous to the more ridiculous. Air's seductive balladry mutated into Gary Numan-goes-prog-rock, and the pulsing "Kelly, Watch The Stars" was vandalised twice: its first half was hi-NRG disco, its second half was hardcore rock. Air must have judged that recreating the soft, otherworldly romance of *Moon Safari* would be too much of a challenge, so they copied out and kitched up instead.

We got a taste of what we were missing when Air removed their tongues from their cheeks. There was a folksy sincerity on two songs from their effin guest vocalist, Beth Hirsch, and there was some skilled theremin playing. The usual function of this instrument at rock concerts is to make random ghostly whistles. To use it to produce specific notes is unheard of.

Then the group slunk back to playing the ridiculous foreigner card, and introduced, via a vocoder, "a song speaking about love under water". So uncool they're cool? No, actually. Just uncool.

Air's opening act was Sean Lennon, who has sung on two albums so far this

NICHOLAS BARBER ROCK

Air, Sean Lennon
Theatre Royal Drury Lane, WC2
John Lennon, 'Anthology'
(Capitol)
Mercury Rev
Garage, N5

year. In May, he released *Into the Sun* (Grand Royal), and on Monday some more of his material hit the shops. The *John Lennon Anthology* (Capitol) is a four-CD boxed set of live tracks, alternative takes and Dylan parodies, plus Lennon's rendition of "Real Love" before the other Beatles got their hands on it a few years ago. You might want to go for the money-saving one-CD summary, *Wonsaponatime*, as there are very few songs here that aren't on the market in some form already. (Be honest, how often do you listen to the Beatles' *Anthologies*?) But anyone who does buy the whole set will be able to hear four-year-old Sean gurgling "With a Little Help from my Friends" and exclaiming, "I like it very

loud," as his doting dad thrashes an electric guitar.

Nineteen years later, and the Beautiful Boy is a fairly beautiful man. Despite the fluffy bleached hair and the rectangular glasses he is facially such a perfect composite of his parents that it's hard to resist comparing him to them. And Sean doesn't help matters by waving and calling, "Hi, Mom" from the stage. He certainly can't sing as well as his dad. In fact, he can't sing as well as his half-brother. But if you weren't judging him against his surname, you'd say he had star potential. His music is interesting and exploratory, and the wispy, hippy, lounge numbers have pretty tunes - before Sean stamps on a distortion pedal and breaks into a thunderous rock interlude. He still likes it very loud.

For now, Lennon Jr has too few focused pop songs and too many exercises in noodling. He needs to move beyond his numerous influences (his dad, commendably, is not the most obvious one) and find his own identity. I'd recommend that he gets out of his New York loft apartment for a few months and plays to gangs of drunken sailors while a Hamburg bar owner shouts "Mach schau!" at him.

Mercury Rev's *Deserter's Songs* (V2) is one of this year's least rock'n'roll albums. Guitars are outnumbered by flugelhorn, harpsichord, violins and celestial choirs, and although the record pays homage to the Doors and The Band along the way, it sounds, if anything, like these two groups' long-lost collections of Christmas carols.

This lack of rock'n'rollishness isn't so remarkable until you see Mercury Rev live, and you discover that when the orchestration is stripped away, you're left with the rock'n'rolliest New Yorkiest band in the world... ever. They dress in black (please note, Air) and have cigarettes hanging off their lips. There's a guitarist called Grasshopper, with the shades and quiff of Stuart Sutcliffe. There's a bassist with a glazed stare that says, "We're American, we're serious about this, and we're cooler than you". And there's Jonathan Donahue, the singer/guitarist with a damaged, reptilian voice, a vampire's smile and glitter on his cheeks to match his guitar. To quote Michael Stipe, who wore the same make-up for his Radio 1 show two weeks ago: "The world is... foxy."

The songs are imbued with just as much essence of rock as the men who play them. The album's elegiac melodies are in place, but onstage they are given the urban, Velvet Underground treatment. You take flugelhorn. I'll take long, druggy guitar solos held in place by blaring organs and a pin-sharp rhythm section.



Le kitsch: Air in the whiter-than-white groove

IRENE HARRILL

TEL: 0171 293 2222

ENTERTAINMENT: CONCERTS, THEATRE

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Concerts	Concerts	Circuses	Concerts	Entertainments
Royal Festival Hall Queen Elizabeth Hall Purcell Room Mozart from the heart Imogen Cooper piano Anne Quireffle piano Sophie Daneman soprano Tickets £18-£38 BBC Symphony Orchestra Thur 12 Nov 7.30pm Royal Festival Hall In Memoriam Britten Ballad of Heroes Vaughan Williams Symphony No.3 'Pastoral' Howells Hymnus Paradisi Richard Hickox conductor Joan Rodgers soprano Anthony Rolfe-Johnson tenor BBC Symphony Chorus All seats £11 (incl. £8) Fri 13 Nov 7.45pm Queen Elizabeth Hall INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER MUSIC SEASON LONDON WINDS Michael Collins clarinet Isabelle van Kaulen viola Howard Shelley piano Mozart Don Giovanni overture Quintet for piano & winds in E-flat (K492); No. 1 in E-flat, K493; Sonatina in C minor (K308) 6.30pm Pre-concert talk £18-£25 Presented by Intermusica Artists' Mgt with BBC	Philharmonia Orchestra Set 21 Nov 7.30pm Royal Festival Hall Charles Mackerras conductor Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K207 Thurs 19 Nov 7.30pm Purcell Room Les Rossignols Fresh Young Artists Series Ian Judson flute, Joseph Angbar guitar Works by Villa Lobos, Piazzolla, Pujol plus Peter McGowan world premiere £10-£25 Thurs 11 Feb 1999 7pm Royal Festival Hall London Mozart Players 50th Anniversary Royal Gala Concert MATTHIAS BAMERT conductor JAMES GALWAY flute MARISA ROBLES harp BARBARA HENDRICKS soprano Mozart Symphony No.28, K200 Concerto for flute and harp, K299 Aria, Vado ma dove, K583 Aria, Al desio di che l'adoro, K577 Aria, Bella mia fiamma, K528 Symphony No.29 in A, K201 John Woolrich Conductor for Orchestra (world premiere) Attended by HRH The Prince Edward, CVO Concert sponsored by Nestle Sponsored by Warburg Dillon Read £30-£110	ALL-NEW PRODUCTION! 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UK debut. 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PETER YORK ON ADS
NO 250: CELLNET

These slackers are completely phoney

Modern dilemmas, contemporary conundra, don't you just love 'em? Cellnet puts them centre stage in its new campaign aimed at the younger, less established type of person (The reality of mobile telephony, meanwhile, is a target market of 10-year old joy-riding arsonists).

The younger type of person described here is a kind of early-Nineties slacker with an anaesthetised, less-than-zero sort of life, but a basic knowledge of computer screens and their nursery-school icons.

So insistent, rhythm-box music backs a voice-over which sounds like the speaker could hardly get out of bed and down to Dean Street for the recording. "Get a bill, don't get a bill," he proposes. "Sign a contract, don't sign a contract." The icons appear in a cute way - handcuffs, glass of beer, mobile telephone, etc - while he rattles off this litany of affectless indecision.

It's meant to be choice, of course, but in this less-than-zero world, it sounds like no big thing.

It is a big thing, of course, a new way of budgeting for calls, making them part of the immediate world of fax packets and phone cards rather than the responsibility sphere of accounts and line rental. "It's your call" is the neat slogan, which sounds a little bit street, a little bit tough and privatised, and quite now enough to hit the Egg and B2 buttons.

The other commercials are just vignettes illustrating the mild pickles such people get themselves into. They're very like the don't-you-just-hate-it-when routines you get on the nursery slopes of the modern comedy circuit. Thus, two girls of a Denise Van Outen cast ogling the same men in a coffee shop. One has cappuccino froth on her nose. The other has to decide whether to say anything - be mean, don't be mean goes the on-screen line. On goes the synthetic drumbeat.

A waking man - Martin Clunes's much younger brother - looks at the happy sleeping girl beside him - Bunk off, don't bunk off is the *Louder* question. Then there's a silly treatment, involving npsd drink on a dark carpet (clean it up, dun't clean it up). Best not to dwell on it.

It adds up to something directional, though. Even Strongbow - remember all those bristling, quivering arrows, all that heavy rock - is running a "loafing" campaign now. Younger-orientated TV advertising has hit Seattle, 1991 with a bang.



HEARD ON AIR

I'm all for laziness: if Mrs. Thatcher had slept more and looked into the middle distance, Britain would be a happier place.

John Bird
Quote, Unquote (R4)

I'm looking for a photograph taken in 1840: it's a photograph of black lace, taken by the light of the moon.

Mark Hayward
Ditto

Heaven is when you arrive at the Radio Theatre for a pleasant evening's entertainment; Hell is when you're asked to be on the panel.

Head of BBC Light Entertainment Jonathan James Moore
Worldly Wise (R4)

I do think it's vital to have flawed characters in the House of Commons.

Ex-MP Michael Brown, The Moral Maze (R4)

If you come from a working-class family, you don't paint bloody pictures, do you? It's sissy. Like playing tennis.

Sir Terry Frost
Front Row (R4)

The Twist is putting out a cigarette with both feet, coming out of the shower and drying your bottom with a towel.

Twist and Shout (R2)

Phone us, or send a fax or an e-mail. For pigeon post, it's out the window and right.

Ken Bruce (R2)

What connects a famous Peruvian, a sickly Scots queen or Portuguese japonica and a full English breakfast?

Nick Clarke
Round Britain Quiz (R4)

People will have to take my excess weight as they find it.

Marjorie Antrobus
The Archers (R4)

ALMEIDA ISLINGTON
Ostravsky's passionate masterpiece

The Storm

A new version by Frank McGuinness

From 12 November

Cast includes: Susan Lynch, Tim Manton, Maggie Steed

Directed by: Hettie Macdonald

Design: Robin Don

AT&T



Bill Clinton: who else? Mocking the president is too easy, even if it is the best part of Rory Bremner's show

Arrows in search of a target

A fortnight ago at the National Television Awards, the producer of *Have I Got News For You* collected the trophy for Most Popular Quiz Show and, in among the usual thank-yous, paid tribute to Ron Davies for making his job so much easier. Yes, I know, I know, he was only joking, but it does get you thinking. Isn't the job of *Have I Got News For You* to satirise people in the news? And, with the deepest respect for the expertise of Paul Merton's delivery, it's not exactly satirical to say, "Clapham Common ... it's a bit of a mouthful, isn't it?"

But it is easy. And so far, satirists have found life under New Labour distinctly difficult. *Ugly Rumours*, a play sending up Blair and Blairism, has just opened in London to ugly reviews. And Rory Bremner began his current series with the words: "I remember thinking when Tony Blair came to power in May last year, what on Earth am I going to do now?" The punchline was that Tony Blair was thinking the same thing himself. Not a bad joke ... except that the image of Blair moving into number 10 with no ideas beyond a bit of wallpapering is one that not many of us would recognise.

New Labour MPs must be adept at camouflage, because today's satirists are reduced to taking pot shots at the old, bullet-ridden carcasses of yesterday. On this week's topical *Drop the Dead Donkey*, one character came up with licking Norman Tebbit's scrotum as the most revolting torture she could think of, and you could hear the champagne corks popping in Millbank: 18 months in power, and still no one in the party is deemed to have sufficiently grotesque genitalia for the joke.

And last Sunday, Harry Enfield starred in *Norman Ornall: A Very Political Turtle* as the embodiment of Tory sleaze. He flogged landmines to Saddam; he discredited a health scare by spooning dogfood into his daughter's mouth; he ran off with his topless typist, then piously informed the Press that he had agreed to make the ultimate sacrifice for his party: "At midnight tonight, I shall be returning to my wife." I doubt it was intentional, but he also bore an amazing physical resemblance to Bernard Ingham.

You can't beat live music. It's the exhilarating sense of risk that is missing from studio recordings. However sublime a sonata on CD may be, you can be certain that there isn't the slightest chance you'll hear a hum note: the tension of the concert-hall is gone.

Although this theory lies behind a large proportion of the BBC budget, the radio, of course, can never be truly live. If you were bowling down the motorway or chopping carrots in your kitchen, you couldn't have been simultaneously at the Glasgow City Hall, watching the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra embark on the first of Nielsen's six symphonies. But you could still experience much of the excitement and danger of that live performance, on air, even though it had been recorded a day or two before being broadcast. As part of Nicholas Kenyon's grand three-year project, *Sounding the Century*, this concert went out on Monday in the *Performance on 3 slot* - and it raced through the attentive nerves, like an electric current.



NICHOLAS BARBER

SATIRE

This mock documentary was written by Craig Brown, Britain's leading parodist (and a close personal friend of the *LoS's* Wallace Arnold), and the jokes were as acute as you'd expect from him. Harriet Walter was painfully credible as Ornall's Jane Clark look-alike wife. And Enfield was revolting both as Ornall and as a roll call of other Tory grandees - here quaintly renamed Julian Bitchily, John Selwyn Swott, Douglas Weir, and so on. But what was the point? The secret of comedy is timing, and these punchlines arrived two years late. *A Very Political Turtle* was heaving its flippers down memory lane, and Ornall was such a stupid, laughable character compared to Rik Mayall's Alan B'Stard that he was more likely to induce a rosy glow of nostalgia than a fiery rage.

I was reminded of another of last month's awards programmes, *Booker Live*, on which Will Self dismissed Julian Barnes's abilities as a satirist: "He has the terrible English problem of whimsy, and of wanting things to be slightly nice and likeable." This is certainly true of most TV comedians. The trouble with the current batch of satirical programmes is that they don't actually have very much satire in them. They might giggle at a hard-to-shift dress stain or a walk on the Clapham wild side, but they are rarely forces for truth and justice. There is only, as Ben Elton might say, a little bit of politics. I don't expect anyone to match those ancient Greek satirists whose targets would hang themselves in shame, but someone might at least give viewers the urge to spit at some fat cats in the street.

Monday's *Clinton: His Struggle With Dirt*, by comedy overlord Armando Iannucci, was another mockumentary, this time looking back at the Lewinsky affair from the year 2028, when Cameron Diaz is president and the American

language is so garbled that Brits can't understand it without a translator (isn't the depressing likelihood that we'd be speaking Americanese ourselves?). Iannucci has his own masterful brand of cerebral silliness, but I came away with the impression that he doesn't particularly dislike or despise Tripp, the Clintons, Starr, or anyone else involved. If he was motivated by any indignation it was directed at television's fondness for flashy graphics and music - as it was on *The Day Today* in 1994. The individual who was dealt the harshest blows was *Newsnight's* Gordon Brewer. Maybe Iannucci is bothered by the fact that Brewer's voice is an excited version of his own.

Rory Bremner can be closer to the bone, although, as we've seen, his material is often not up to the peerless standard of his impersonations. There are jokes so feeble that *Week Ending* would have used them, and sketches which lead you to suspect that some ratings-conscious executive has forced Bremner to balance the political stuff with a skit or two on Ainsley Harriot and Vanessa Feltz. His best moments in this series come when a genuine newscaster interviews him at length in the guise of Blair or Clinton, so that he has enough time to develop his impersonation beyond the notion that the PM is someone who can't take a breath without saying *you know, come on, look or I mean*.

The series is nothing if not hit-and-miss, and embarrassingly, it's Bremner who does most of the missing, and his right-hand men, John Bird and John Fortune, who do most of the hitting. The nominal star must regret choosing the title, *Rory Bremner ... Who Else?* Bird and Fortune, also using the interview format, pick apart a particular speech or policy with meticulous, merciless logic every week, and are fluent in the rhetoric of managerial buck-passing. Thanks to these two, at least a few privatised utility bosses must have had an expectation in the eye.

They remind us that satire shouldn't necessarily be an easy job: it shouldn't be about sitting and waiting for the Welsh Secretary to be taken for a ride. There are news stories which demand satirical treatment every day, but you sometimes have to look past the most obvious

figures of fun to find them. *Have I Got News For You* is by no means as lazy as some of its rivals, though. The Ron Davies jokes may be barn-door marksmanship, but the programme is still surprisingly healthy, especially considering how long it's been going. If you watch archive episodes now, half the laughs arise from seeing how Angus Deayton's hairstyle has changed.

You can still rely on Ian Hislop for some moral indignation, even when it's entirely unjustified, while Paul Merton and the show itself are never half as funny without each other. And if it seems like many years since Deayton's links were more amusing than they were irritating, look at all the comedy quiz shows which have appeared in *Have I Got News For You's* wake. The urbane Deayton model is still the one the other quizmasters follow.

So our most effective political satirical programmes are the ones which have run for the longest. But what about the next generation? Channel 4 has *The 11 O'Clock Show*, which is written and recorded in its entirety on the day of broadcast. The pilot series was hampered by having two humour-free presenters, but it had a couple of highly promising faces in the supporting cast, particularly Iain Lee, who has been cloned from Hugh Laurie's toenail clippings. ITV's *Stuff the Week* is a post-*Fantasy Football* satire in that the laidback young comedians flop around a living-room set and chortle at each other's jokes (to be fair, they are usually well worth a chortle). They do a conscientious job of making a bonfire out of the Press, so I'm not going to say anything impolite about them.

Finally, a major new satire starts next week. *A Sermon from St Albion's* is written by Ian Hislop, and Harry Enfield is again on *Kid Hears and Cornets* duty, playing half the Labour cabinet himself, including Tony Blair as the trendy reverend he is in *Private Eye*. I just hope it's not too gentle. Enfield was quoted in the papers on Thursday as saying: "Tony Blair is a decent bloke, probably, so he won't mind being a happy-clappy vicar." No chance of him hanging himself, then?

THE WEEK IN RADIO

Live and dangerously breathtaking



SUE GAISFORD

In 1901, Carl Nielsen was 27, and so obsessed with Beethoven's Fifth Symphony that he wrote it all out from memory, fully scored. Nielsen's own first effort in the genre, said Stephen Johnson, "reminds you of someone who's just rushed through a hedge and is shaking himself". And so it was - exuberant, young, triumphant. And then came Cristina Ortiz playing Rachmaninov's famous Second Piano Concerto, composed in the same year. Her interpretation was deeper and less restrained than could be glimpsed in a brief encounter - the notes spilling out, sometimes inaccurately, but at such a speed and with such passion that it left me gasping, having forgotten to breathe.

A different, mellower kind of excitement emanated from the 100 Club when Humphrey Lyttelton and his band played there for *Jazz Notes* (R3) later that night. Humph is a national treasure. The deadpan world-weariness of his chairmanship of *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* is probably the single funniest element of the only unmissable R4 panel game, ever. But his first love was the jazz trumpet, and he has been 50 years a band-leader. You could hear the ease and familiarity of his players' interaction and enjoy the deliciously riotous and unconfined excesses

of their solos - particularly when the great septuagenarian Kathy Stobart let rip on the tenor sax in a very cheerful version of "Tea for Two". Every item in the programme had been composed or arranged by Humph. Typically, he dismissed this achievement, saying that he'd written and recorded about 200 tracks, of which 199 had sunk without trace.

R3 has recently developed its jazz coverage, with *Jazz Notes* going out four nights a week and Saturday's *Jazz Record Requests* extended to an hour. This latter is an excellent series, hosted by the genial and extraordinarily knowledgeable Geoffrey Smith. His distinctive "Hello" - as if he's both surprised and delighted you're there - is becoming as established a vocal signature as Alistair Cooke's eternally reassuring "Good morning" - or, if you listen on Fridays, "Good evening".

Elsewhere on the airwaves, the talk has been of relationships. *First Nights* (R4) followed an engaged couple down the aisle and into a four-poster bed - in the very Cardiff hotel used once (gasp) by Tony Blair. The point of this was that Luke and Sarah had decided on a radical policy of marriage before sex. "People say, oh, wow, how could you do that? I wouldn't be able to," said Sarah. When the history of our century is written, such remarks will show just how far we've advanced. A curious mix of coyness and prurience, this mini-documentary proved little. The post-coital question "What was it like?" wasn't - quite - asked, but the happy couple volunteered the information that it had been very nice to wake up with each other.

A little further down the line, the fine novelist Tim Parks read from his new collection of essays *Adultery and Other Diversions* (R3). The first followed the collapse of a friend's marriage after the husband's initial, casual affair. It was a sorry story, told with thoughtful insight. In our organised world of automatic gates and comprehensive insurance, said Parks, divorce remains one of the few catastrophes we can reasonably expect to provoke. He saw serial adultery as tangled up with the fear of mortality, a desperate attempt to regain the exuberant enthusiasm that had led to marriage in the first place.

His advice, when you hear the siren song of temptation, is to sandbag the doors and, a little surprisingly, to take up cricket. Still, as quoted in Russell Davies's sparkling new series *Cole Porter: Night and Day* (R2), "When every night the set that's smart? Is intruding on nudist parties, anything goes".

R2 has been trying to help, with its latest Social Action Project, *Building Bridges*. Terry Wogan had the Rev Matthew Reed in his *Pause for Thought*, who suggested that a successful marriage was like making sure a car was serviced. Meanwhile, everyone was dropping in with advice. Claire Rayner and her husband were particularly baffling. In the space of 25 seconds they spoke of their own rules and then said you have to have rows - and then that there are absolutely no rules. Thanks. I preferred another couple who ended an argument when she spun round from the freezer and hurled some fish across the room: it gave, she said, a whole new meaning to battered cod.

JP 11/10/98

You have to laugh: it's the only medicine for a ticklish rat

Thanks to last week's *Horizon*, "Beyond a Joke", Professor Jaak Panksepp will go down in scientific history as the man who made a rat laugh. No small feat. Panksepp tickles rats, and using bat-detector equipment he records their hysterics. It's a sort of chirpy chuckle, not very infectious, but it's nice to know that rats aren't all business. I wondered if one could make a cat laugh using the same technique. In the spirit of scientific inquiry I cornered our own cat, Kipper, and tickled him. He bit me.

Before *Horizon* got down to its serious points about laughter and the importance of play, it first had to convince us to take its rat-amusers, laugh-trackers and tickle-monitors seriously. Denman Rooke's film tried to differentiate between "the self-tickle and an external tickle", to figure out why you can't tickle yourself, using a machine that appeared to have been made from an old movie projector with a foam finger on the end.

It was hard to divorce the absurdities of these people's jobs from the importance of their findings,

TIM DOWLING
SCIENCE
Horizon
BBC1

which were a revelation. Human laughter, like that of rats, is a basic, instinctive language, which has everything to do with social relationships and nothing to do with humour. We laugh all the time, and not at jokes, but at statements like "Hey Joel! Where you been?" and "Here comes John!". Actually, this is a little depressing.

There's more. We have another laughter trigger in our higher brain. In a study of epilepsy, a young woman with electrodes implanted in the speech centres of her brain was shown a picture of a fork. When they turned on the juice she laughed so hard she nearly came out of her electro-hat. Watching her-

self crack up on video some years later she said, "It was so not funny", and laughed again. Weird.

About halfway through, the programme had to make a leap from these discoveries to their implications for child development. While the link is far from tenuous, it was a little difficult to follow at first. Before we knew it, we were talking about children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD, a syndrome that seems to have gathered a new initial since I last heard about it. There is no doubt that ADHD is debilitating, but in its most extreme form it can be treated with drugs, specifically Ritalin. The worry is that it is becoming a catch-all behavioural diagnosis. One in 18 American children is now classed as suffering from ADHD, and the US consumes five times more Ritalin than the rest of the world combined. In Britain, Ritalin prescriptions have leapt from 2,000 to 90,000 in the last six years.

Was this the same programme as the one I started watching, the one with the laughing rat? Yes, it was. Professor Panksepp concluded, through "his

growing understanding of rat laughter and play", that much of what is diagnosed as ADHD is "simply wanting to play in the wrong places". More controversially, he opined that ADHD may have once been a positive trait, "back when we were hunter-gatherers". I find the term "hunter-gatherer" - science-speak for "caveman" - preposterous. Who knows what hunter-gatherers got up to? It has become a simplistic way to account for traits which don't seem to fit into our modern life as shopper-drivers. The widespread misdiagnosis of ADHD is a scandal, but describing the behaviour of uncontrollable children as just so much leftover Ice Age boisterousness is not particularly helpful, or even enlightening.

Some confusion is inevitable with issues this complex, but there is one clear message: "Increasing class time at the expense of play does not increase academic performance. On the contrary, it produces many of the early signs of ADHD." Teachers have more or less known this all along, but these days no one listens to them. It's enough to sober up a rat.

Protect an endangered species

PRODUCTION VALUES

JIM BURGE

Last week saw a rare conjunction. Two landmark series running at the same time: *The Life of Birds* (BBC1, Wednesdays) and *Earth Story* (BBC2, Sundays). Landmarks are series that claim direct descent from Lord Clark's *Civilisation* and Jacob Bronowski's *The Ascent of Man*, the twins who founded factual television. Their common format involves a single eminent presenter developing an argument over a number of weeks. The aim is identifiably lofty: to familiarise the viewer with one or other of the structural elements of the edifice of human knowledge.

It is not so obvious nowadays that knowledge is an edifice and, for this reason, the genre makes some people feel uncomfortable. All theoretical doubts disappear, however, in the face of the affable self-assurance of a presenter such as David Attenborough. *The Life of Birds* takes his pieces to camera and puts them with wildlife footage with the kind of confidence (and money) that takes a crane in a remote Scottish location for a single establishment. The commentary never jurs or irritates. Special effects, when they are used, enter as unobtrusively as Jeeves the butler.

Fledgling landmark presenter, Aubrey Manning, also made a creditable start with *Earth Story*. As a biologist who is interested in geology, he manages to be expert and amateur at one and the same time. Geology does pose a problem, though: rocks peck not, neither do they flap, so what do you put on the screen while you are talking about them?

Although series producer David Singleton was sometimes thrown back on staples like time-lapses of clouds, waves breaking on the shore, and a rather half-hearted reconstruction, only very occasionally did they bear the tell-tale marks of desperation. The programme's main assets were human. We met a succession of enthusiasts: a fossil collector with an encyclopaedic knowledge of ammonites, the keeper of the world's oldest pebble, and a geologist in South Africa who read the land like an ancient seer. Manning combined all this into a coherent account of the discovery of geological time, and I for one coded up more interested in rocks than I was before.

The landmark series is, so far as I am aware, uniquely British, yet it has always relied on foreign money. *The Life of Birds* was co-produced with the old, established Public Broadcasting Service, known to disgruntled Americans as the particularly British system. *Earth Story* has got into bed with the new source of mega-bucks, the Discovery Channel, via its subsidiary, the Learning Channel.

The ways of Discovery are not our ways and I confess that I have been disquieted ever since an executive of the channel told me that a script I had written had too many black people in it. What worried me most about this remark was that the film in question was about Martin Luther King. Discovery relies on a narrowly defined advertising audience and it will never risk anything that they might get puzzled or upset by (a cynic might say that it didn't want them to learn or discover anything).

Apart from the music, which made a misguided attempt to generate spurious tension, *Earth Story* showed few signs of its co-producer's influence. A series about rocks is the least likely to provoke ideological conflict, and, as a landmark, it had the whole force of the corporation behind it.

Others are not so able to protect their virtue. There is now a genre of factual programme that substitutes any attempt at large-scale understanding with an escalation of ever-more fiery volcanoes, more terrible weapons, or more devastating storms. The danger is that eventually these disasters may completely erode the landmarks of informed and intelligent wonder at the natural world which are shown in us by the likes of Attenborough and Manning.

Up close with the vice squad

Hooked, a tour of addiction in 20th-century Britain, this week got round to sex. It's a waste of ink to point out that the most conspicuous sex addict in Britain is television itself. But I will anyway, because this week, television has been feeding its own ravenous appetite even more than usual. While *Sex and Shopping* got on with its long lingering look at the porn industry, *Panorama* exposed the mess that is the Obscene Publications Act. *Eurotrash* had a quiet week in the company of a German photographer who has snapped the breasts of half the women in the town where he lives. *Hooked* gave you sex, the oral history. Later this month, ITV takes up the reins in *Vice: the Sex Trade*. And I haven't even mentioned *drinking*.

For all their variety, these programmes were drinking from the same well: Britain's troubled relationship with sex. The whole joke of *Eurotrash* hinges on the fact that the laws on pornography are far stricter in the United Kingdom than elsewhere in Europe. We can all recite the list of abstract nouns which form the tricolour of Anglo-Saxon sexuality: prudence, hypocrisy, lasciviousness. The icon of France's sexual revolution was Brigitte Bardot. Ours was Barbara Windsor, an innuendo made flesh, who was celebrated in *Best of British*.

Into this murky landscape comes *Sex and Shopping*, a series that bears all the hallmarks of Channel 5, being both desperate to lasso your attention and strung out to twice the length it would be anywhere else. In the duration of the series there's a kind of masculine boastfulness - 13 episodes is television's equivalent of 13 inches. You do wonder whether there's that much to say about porn, which, give or take the odd minor tweak in predilection, isn't big on variety. There may be more hardcore sex shops in America than branches of McDonald's, but you wouldn't make even a six-part series about cheeseburgers.

However, *Sex and Shopping* will be teasing it out. Last week's opener was basically a promo for *Vivid*, the most successful wholesalers of porn in the US. This week featured a profile of John T Bone, a British maker of Hollywood skin flicks and an expert whose exemplary moderation we can all be proud of. "I own the keys to the candy store," he said. "But I only eat the candy that I really like." From the look of him, he probably has to leave room for the pies.

Dropped into these individual episodes are running interviews with people who have (a) views on pornography and (b) an inability to spot a stitch-up from six feet away. It looks decidedly as if some of them - Laurence O'Toole, or the Labour MEP Carol Tongue - have been chosen for names which hardly seem to differ from those of porn stars themselves.

JASPER REES
SEX
Panorama BBC1

Sex and Shopping C5
Eurotrash C4
Hooked C4

Legend has it that porn stars devise names by using their mother's maiden name and the name of their first pet. But John T Bone's stable includes a stud called Dave Hardman. And the female porn stars seem to be named after harmless metropolises. Step this way, Chichester and Salt Lake City. (I may as well mention here the assistant chief constable of the West Midlands police force featured in *Panorama*: one Anne Summers.)

It's indicative of *Sex and Shopping*'s mission to subvert that not only are the interviews dived up into tiny soundbites, but also that flashes of graphic activity are sandwiched between them. A typical half-minute sequence may run thus: David Starkey - fellatio - editor of *Index on Censorship* - masturbation - Teddy Taylor MP. As Lou Reed nearly sang, you got talking head even when they were given head. How many of the impressive cast-list would have agreed to participate if forewarned that a 14-year-old would have the key to the cutting room?

Sex and Shopping is thus the most flagrant case yet of television having its cake and cramming it greedily down its own gullet. There are times when it simply looks like a job-creation scheme for those people who impose blurred computer squares over explicit images. But when it wants to, it has surprisingly sound points to make. It just makes them rather bristly. *Panorama* needed 40 minutes to explain that police, government, customs and juries all have different interpretations of the Obscene Publications Act, which bans "material likely to corrupt or deprave", whatever that means. *Sex and Shopping* made the same point in about 90 seconds. And then got back to the computer squares.

We can acquit *Panorama* on the cake-eating charge. The most it chose to show were shots of reporter John Ware squinting at illegal pornography or, via a hidden camera, of him purchasing it. Ware's argument was that until the OPA is clearly defined and unanimously enforced, images of sex between consenting adults will be confused with what, posing as a customer in a sex shop, he called "something a bit more adventurous". James Ferman, who until last year was head of the British Board



Hot issue: what is regarded as obscene in Britain is often open to interpretation

DAVID SANDISON

of Film Classification, suggested that we should "legalise consenting stuff and concentrate the forces of law on the more disturbing stuff". Jack Straw, who declined to be interviewed, described this approach in a letter as "circular and risible". Ware seemed to think that this was itself risible coming from a graduate cum laude of Sixties radicalism. They can argue as long as they like. It won't stop the internet sneaking in and making pornography unpoliceable.

The problem for the OPA is that there is no actual evidence which links corruption and depravity with viewing sexual images. We could have done with some statistics comparing sexual violence in the UK and, say, free-wheeling Holland. Nor do these programmes solve the other age-old question: is pornography a man's world which degrades women? As ever, it depends on whom you ask. Ware interviewed a woman who during a video shoot had been spanked so hard she fainted. Over in LA, John

T Bone explained that he prefers "to work with women who like to be spanked and have their hair pulled". Both sound pretty degrading to me, but in one instance the spanking is consensual, the other not. One of the T Bone stable said: "I love it that all these men think that I'm very important. They want to see me. That makes me feel good." She may make dirty videos, but at least T-bone keeps her hair washed clean.

There is only one consensus in this area - that you can't squeeze the toothpaste back into the tube. *Hooked* told of an age in which sex addicts found gratification harder to come by than the series' other junkies, the smoking and drinking crowd. A sex addict has never had it so good, when he can score a cyberbitch on the world wide web. The *Vivid* president talked about making his stable of porn stars "super-marketable". It may not be long now before they are supermarketable.

When scandal fails, television will need more than a News Bunny

So the come back kid came back. The American mid-term elections are in their way a stunning story. But not, for television, as stunning as a story as Bill Clinton's previous fall from grace.

While the news bulletins here gave adequate coverage to the election results, it was far less than they gave the various episodes of the Monica Lewinsky story. Power may be the great aphrodisiac, as Henry Kissinger said. But sex trumps politics. Even the most rapturous scenes of Democratic rejoicing on election night don't have the televisual appeal of a zaffig young woman throwing her arms round the President's neck with that special look.

In an intelligent two-way with Julia Somerville, ITN's authoritative Washington correspondent, James Mates, described clearly how this week's election results give a twist to the story that few anticipated until the last few days. So far from the scandal driving the election results, the election results may have damped down the scandal.

Others will be saying elsewhere in the paper what this means for American politics. What concerns us is what it says about the relationship between politics and television. Or rather, what it confirms. The people who control television news have decided that politics as we used to watch it has less and less appeal. And in their own terms, and on certain definitions of "politics", they are quite right.

The evidence of falling audiences for news bulletins is only part of the story. Television is impatient of detail, or impatient of all but the most dramatic and telling detail - the baby's shoe left behind after the earthquake. A new generation of viewers will be even more impatient of lengthy, complex explanations, of talking heads, of "issues".

GODFREY HODGSON
THE NEWS

But democratic politics are inevitably about detail. They are complex. They consist, all too often, of middle-aged men talking about issues.

Now and then, traditional Westminster politics delivers just what television wants: the Falklands debate, Geoffrey Howe's assault on Margaret Thatcher, David Mellor's "up your hacienda, Jimmy!" or some other memorably raw confrontation.

Mostly, though, what has been served up as political television, is televisual death. And now we are barreling into a multi-channel world where to be dull will be even more deadly. British television news is going to be in the position of a fairground barker desperately calling back an audience that is melting away. Certainly editors act as if that is what they feel. For them, Monica was a godsend.

Crime, too, is an easy alternative to being boring. In Britain, scarcely a night goes by without grim-faced police on screen quartering waste land in the hunt for some missing girl's body. Poor Roo Davies could never have got a hundredth of the coverage by being chief minister of Wales that he got by collating on the common, if that is what he did.

Many years ago, I wrote about the contrasting styles of the Republican and Democratic campaigns. I went first to the Republicans, sober men of business in those pre-Gingrich days. A nice man

in a grey suit assured me that Republicans put the issues before the people as fairly as they could.

I went to the Democrats, and found the campaign director sitting on the floor with two good-looking women, all three splitting their sides as they inflated giant red-white and blue condoms inscribed "For maximum protection. Vote Johnson-Humphrey". The Democrats won, in a landslide.

We are all in greater or less degree voyeurs, all bored with the rituals and rhetoric of what we disparagingly call "Westminster politics". We will always want drama and scandal. But when scandal and drama fail, how will television news find new ways of bringing us real politics?

So far, innovation has been largely limited to such bold strokes as putting the female anchor in front of the desk. Wow! That journalistic genius, Kelvin McKenzie, came up with the news bunny, alternately hopping or cringing behind the news reader's back as the news was good or bad. Channel Four News broke new ground by explaining how the Bank of England had to get the policy mix just right by showing a plump actor in a shower with mixer taps too cold, be shivered, too hot, he yelped.

If news is to grab and hold a new audience, such gimmicks won't do. The challenge is the same as for politicians: to find out what the new audience cares about. If the news barons can do that, the families of murdered girls can be left to grieve, and the occasional Monica or Ron will be sheer bonus. Aggressive reporting and determined investigation will be part of the winning formula. But the key will be to treat the viewers, not as "the punters out there", but with respect. For we have met the viewers, and they are us.

some feelings last forever

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It's the surreal thing

This has been a busy autumn for Fiona Bradley, one of our most promising young exhibition organisers. She has left the Liverpool Tate for the Hayward Gallery in London, and currently has shows running in both venues. At the Hayward, her task has been to impose some sort of aesthetic order on the random scraps of fashion in "Addressing the Century". The Liverpool exhibition is perhaps closer to Bradley's concerns. She is an historian of Surrealism and has devised "Salvador Dali: a Mythology" to illustrate a theory about the painter's beliefs. More about this theory in a moment.

We were not in desperate need of a Dali exhibition. There was a big show at the Hayward as recently as 1994, and one doesn't return in his canvases for deeper and more lasting pleasure. It's in the nature of Dali's art that he gives us a particular kind of visual thrill and nothing more. Personally, I find that even a small handful of Dali paintings provides an ample display of his talents. He doesn't get better when seen in quantity, especially since his imaginative fire expired quite early in his career, around 1937 or so. The Liverpool show isn't large – around 30 paintings only – and this seems a reasonable allowance.

The project feels more extensive because the paintings are augmented by dozens of well-chosen photographs. Unlike many painters, Dali doesn't suffer when we see him in their midst. Such prints can even enhance the qualities of his style. They prove that his brand of hallucinated realism gives results that the camera could never equal. Photographs also help us to explore Dali's eccentricity. Perhaps only Picasso had more love of posing for the camera. And if Dali were not such a posur, we feel, he would not be such an interesting man. Even though we know that it was all a sham.

Surely Dali's paintings of the 1925-35 period – to say nothing of his woe-filled later work – were totally inauthentic. It is the manic self-assurance of his falsity that makes the pictures so striking. The Liverpool exhibition does not change our general view of

TIM HILTON EXHIBITIONS

Salvador Dali: A Mythology
Liverpool Tate Gallery

Dali and his enterprises. He was an academic painter, artistically (and politically) conservative, whose work lacks true invention and creative spirit. Dali has only a marginal place in the avant-garde, a position he gained by antics and careerism. Dali brought nothing genuinely new to the art of painting and, in general, he demeaned art.

Thus goes the usual argument. But now comes Fiona Bradley, more than ably assisted by another Dali expert, Dawn Ades, who knew the artist in his old age (he died in 1989) and has subsequently been his biographer and ideologue. Ades and Bradley, the instigators of the exhibition, take no notice at all of Dali's merits as a painter. They simply assume his genius, and explicate Dali as though his art were that of a superior intellect.

Hence the disjunction of the show. The top floor of the Liverpool Tate is packed with people – for Dali is of course a popular painter – while in the catalogue are recondite and self-serving arguments about the surrealist mind. That is why the exhibition is called "Salvador Dali: a Mythology". Bradley and Ades assert that Dali's interest in Freud, his obsessions with William Tell and Millet, his fantasies about his wife – and much else – make up a consistent mythology, and that his paintings, because they illustrate this mythology, demand our attention far precisely that reason.

They should not feel so secure. Since at least the middle of the 19th century, the study of mythology has been comparative. By study of their myths we are convinced that some civilisations were greater than others. We believe, for instance, that the Greek mind exceeded the Aztec mind. It's also clear that myths have their best expression at the height of a civilisation, and that such myths were held in common. How on earth



Posers' corner: Dali's 'Meditation on the Harp', 1932-34. He's an academic painter, and owes a lot to the Spanish baroque

can the excitable, self-loving, money-mad, moustache-donned Salvador Dali be allowed into the great discussions on western myth?

He was given an entrance through Sigmund Freud. The psychoanalyst was a father figure to Dali's imaginations. Some pieces in the first room of the show come from the Freud Museum in Hampstead. Leading them is Freud's plaster reproduction of the classical relief *Gradiva*. The importance of *Gradiva* to Dali is well explained in the catalogue. However, the pieces from Freud's collection seem detached from the main focus of the exhibition. One goes to Dali to look at his painting. Scholarship about the arcane

corridors of his mind is all very well, but has little to do with our experience of his art.

Putting aside a 1925 picture of his father, Dali's paintings work best when they are landscapes. He was not a successful figure painter, and portraits of his wife are particularly bad. Dali comes to the height of his style when he takes a relatively small canvas – he always fails when he attempts a big picture – and then invites us to coter a country that slides away from the viewer into desert-like indeterminate space. Within this space he places enigmatic or inappropriate objects. The brooding figure of *Gradiva* supplies an enigma. The appearance of a lobster or a telephone startles us because

we think that they belong to domestic rather than metaphysical life.

Despite his attempts to shock, Dali reveals himself as a conventional painter. He owes far more to the academics of his native land than to the innovations of the avant-garde. His Spanishness says much more about him than any theory of Surrealism. These telephones, for instance. They are indebted to a style of Spanish still-life that was invented in the 17th century. Dali paints them with modish vulgarity, but obviously enjoys the display of virtuosity that was always a wonder of that tradition.

I suspect that Dali's landscapes, and his skies, were

influenced by Spanish saloo painting of the late 19th century. His academicism is also highly Spanish. As we know, Spanish classicism was the baroque. Dali's style is only superficially modern; really it is that of a baroque artist, brought up to admire and emulate the dramas and changes of scale seen in grandiose altarpieces. Dali couldn't escape such religiosity. It was his heritage. He may have tried to invent a mythology for his own purposes, but the Catholic church and its art would ever release their hold on his pictorial imagination.

'Salvador Dali: A Mythology', Liverpool Tate Gallery (0151 709 3223) to 31 January.

PUBLIC VIEW

ADVENTURES IN CONTEMPORARY ART

NO 8: THE FOUR CORNERS



DUNCAN MCLAREN

I've entered a huge dark gallery. In each of its four corners is a glowing hemispherical earth, bearing the familiar markings and divisions of a map. Mark Wallinger's spheres are actually two-dimensional projections on to circular canvases. But they look 3-D because of shadows cast into corners of the room they lean against, and because of the perspective on the lines of latitude and longitude.

By the light of one of the projections, I read from the press release: "In 1945, members of the Johns Hopkins Physics Laboratory named the four corners of the earth as being in Ireland, south-east of the Cape of Good Hope, west of the Peruvian coast, and between New Guinea and Japan. Each of these corners (of several thousand square miles in area) is some 120ft above the geodetic mean, and the gravitational pull is measurably greater at these locations."

This is the Irish corner. In order to get it in the centre of what must be the model globe, the artist's viewpoint was from somewhere in space above the Arctic. So the Arctic Circle is at the top of the projection, and the equator runs along the bottom circumference. But that's at the receding margins of the circle, which is dominated by the Atlantic Ocean (my black shadow, for the moment) and Western Europe. This is our corner of the world, then. I draw tentative flight paths to Spain, Portugal, Greece; a winding overland route to Italy; and several short ferry trips to Amsterdam. And that's the sum of my travels abroad. Just Britain really. Pale green Britain.

The big pink area on the right is named Russia, rather than the Soviet Union. It's not a brand new map, so it's an old one – the borders were drawn before I was born. Of all the Mediterranean islands only Malta is marked, in the same-sized lettering as used for HUNG, BELG and SPAIN. So why did Mark Wallinger use a crass, out-of-date political map rather than a geodetic one which would have highlighted this four-corner idea? I walk from one corner of the globe to another. Basically it's Africa; the Americas; the Far East; and Western Europe. Maybe the map was made in 1945, following that great upheaval – that complete madness – in our corner of the world. Not

forgetting a couple of atomic bombs in another.

I keep moving in a circle, and am now close to the middle of the room, where the four projectors sit on a white plinth. My shadow isn't as black as before, but it completely eclipses each corner of the globe in turn as I orbit, press release in hand. After his trip in the moon, Buzz Aldrin was asked if he had any regrets about the mission. "I wish I had looked out of the window more," he replied. That was in the 1960s. What would Buzz have seen if he had looked out of his spaceship window? Europe recovering from itself, Japan developing at an exponential rate, thanks, perhaps, to its radioactive legacy; North America consuming everything it could get its hands on (Hollywood films, tankfuls of gas, double-layer burgers, triple-thick shakes); famine in Africa.

I keep orbiting. As soon as I eclipse one corner of the globe, my eyes move on to the next.

Chris Offili is painting. His ancestors come from Africa, and since he made a trip to Zimbabwe, he's been using elephant dung in his celebratory pictures of black people which are now hanging in London's Tate Gallery. On Kawara is working in his New York studio. He was born in Japan, but now works in cities worldwide. He is painting the date on a canvas – going through a familiar routine, by which the canvas is begun and finished within the same precious day – and will start on a new painting when the sun rises tomorrow. Richard Long is walking aimlessly along a country road near Bristol. But when not at home he can be found walking purposefully – making stone circles en route – almost anywhere on the planet. His wall-mounted text "A 7-DAY WALK ON THE EAST BANK OF THE RIO GRANDE" is quoted on page two of Buzz's humper new book.

What do we see? Men, basically. Colonising the world, but in a non-Hitleresque way that Buzz can live with.

'The Four Corners of the Earth' by Mark Wallinger, Delta, SE1 (0171 3576600), to 22 November.

'Personal Delivery', Duncan McLaren's book is out now from Quartet (£12).

Meanwhile, in Tin Pan Alley ...

Call it retro, call it postmodern – call it anything you like in fact – but contemporary jazz isn't really contemporary any more. Instead, it's mostly hunting ever backwards in a kind of fast-rewind through the styles of the last five decades. For a new artist who wants to be successful, a refuge offered by the past – in, say, the musically dexterous world of post-war small-group swing à la Nat "King" Cole – may therefore seem as good a place as any to pitch up. This process partly explains the incredible success of the Canadian pianist and singer Diana Krall – the biggest new name in jazz – who headlines an Oris London Jazz Festival concert at the Barbican on Thursday. But Krall isn't just a symptom of some cultural malaise; she's really, really, good. Her voice is a dream of close-miked, breathy expressiveness, her piano playing swings like the clappers, and she has impeccable jazz credentials. But why does she have to sound like 1952?

It may well be that there isn't much choice. The modernist line that stretched from Coleman Hawkins, through to Charlie Parker and Miles Davis, and on to John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman, along with the seemingly boundless formal experimentation that accompanied it, ran out years ago. Free improvisation – jazz's version of the end of history – is now 40 years old. Even in the margins of the avant-garde, the trend is towards crossovers with contemporary classical music, as if jazz in itself is no longer sustainable. The retro aesthetic is also more complicated than it first appears, and worthy of several Cultural Studies dissertations. All over America, young people are now dancing to old swing records and to new hands who copy the repertoire, in a strange movement that somehow mixes the subculture of serious pizazzes and tattoos with Glenn Miller and the Lindy Hop.

Diana Krall's albums for the Impulse label regularly top the jazz charts, and in the US she actually gets played on the radio, where the dominant

PHIL JOHNSON JAZZ FESTIVAL PREVIEW

"Smooth Jazz" format is so anodyne that it makes even the very mellow Krall sound a little spiky. In the UK Krall has moved from support slots, to headliner at Ronnie Scott's, to a main concert attraction. In little more than two years. And while her winning style may be stuck in the groove cut by the "King" Cole Trio way back when, it works. So why fix it?

"I don't really like categories, but I'm coming out of a traditional approach," says Krall, when I talk to her by telephone at her family's home in Vancouver. "I'd prefer to call it acoustic jazz, but I keep doing different things. For instance I've just finished recording on a Christmas album with Céline Dion, and also recorded with the Chieftains. I'm trying to come from the jazz tradition, but that doesn't mean that it's retro."

Diana Krall, who will be 34 next week, insists that her chosen style derives quite naturally from her family background in British Columbia. "I grew up listening to everything from Puccini to George Formby," she says. "My dad collects old 78s and cylinder recordings and I heard a lot of music in the house, from Fats Waller and Connie Boswell to Peter Frampton and Elton John. It was eclectic, but I always gravitated to jazz. I had a band director at school who turned me on to Charlie Parker and Bill Evans, and that was it."

Her repertoire focuses on "standards". The Tin Pan Alley songs that have fed jazz for much of this century, and whose vocal traditions were defined by singers such as Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald. It's a hard act to follow, and one that most female vocalists these days fail to live up to. "I don't think I make the songs new," Krall says hesitantly, when asked to account for the way she approaches standards. "I don't really know

what to do with them, but I just find things in the lyrics that make sense to me as a young woman, and I try to interpret their areas of experience. They've been interpreted by jazz musicians as well as vocalists, and harmonically they're great blowing vehicles. Lyrically, it's like interpreting a play. I can feel a story in it, and there's a lot of theatre involved."

The sense of theatre came across in her Ronnie Scott's season earlier this year. Krall has a modest but commanding presence, and she talks to the audience between tunes with an easy intimacy that very few others could carry off, even in a context as traditionally confessional as that of the female jazz singer. At some point during each set, Krall sits demurely at the keyboard and lets the musicians of her trio have a rest while she takes on a solo. She doesn't have a big voice, and she never tries to stretch it by scolding or forcing vocal effects. Instead, she leans in to within kissing distance of the mike and whispers the typically love-lorn lyrics as confidentially as if she were talking on the phone to her best friend. Her warm, seductively accented intonation does the rest. The emotion in the lyrics bubbles up like spring water.

It may not be the future of jazz. But then again, what is, other than some other version of the past? As Diana Krall slowly burns her way through "You're Getting to be a Habit with Me", and the consoling, flickering-fireside heat of her voice is brought into sharp contrast with the rather icy eroticism of her cool looks and preoccupation, postmodernism almost begins to seem like a good thing.

Diana Krall Trio with Fred Hersch: Barbican Centre, EC2 (0171 638 8891), Thursday.

The Oris London Jazz Festival continues to Sunday 15 November; see Critics Choice, page 15, for next week's other highlights.

What sounded like 'I mean Hell' turned out to be 'I need help'

Latin America has come to London, and not only in the form of General Pinochet. The Latino Poets – septuagenarian Piri Thomas and Miguel Algarin, plus relative youngsters Ruben Martinez and Garland Thompson – are a group of agit-prop artists who are only too ready to volunteer their own poetic comment on Latin American current affairs.

More usually resident at the New York poetry café, this group, recently seen at the Jazz Café, Camden, is a heady mix of Cuban, Puerto Rican, Spanish Harlem, Salvadoran, Mexican and Californian origins. They have a poetic take on everything "Latino", from US-style democracy to dictatorship, global economics to poverty.

More than anything, however, their work is about the street ... or, more unexpectedly, the highway. Following a plurality of mood poems about growing up rough, Martinez makes a humorous return to "Highway 61", updating Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan by introducing motel voice-mails and Mexican beers to his poem, as elements of a TexMex on-the-road daily life.

The range of the poets' styles

AMANDA HOPKINSON POETRY

The Latino Poets
Jazz Café, NW1

is amazing: from ballad to folksong, love song to spiritual (with the Rio Grande substituting for the River Jordan), epiphany (after "all my boys, those who made it" to "those who didn't, in remembrance") to epiphany. Many of their poems are about reclaiming the ambiguous terminology of *negrito*, *el mundo grande* and *mujerada* – the "wetbacks", so-called after their daily swim to work north of the border, whose glistening wet backs Martinez highlights, calling upon us to admire for their beauty.

As Mexico repopulates the states it shed a century ago – Florida, California, Oregon – so the language is adapting, and becoming cosmopolitan. Slang is international on the whole, although the prevalence and power of insults to mothers (and so the Virgin), seemed out of context to Camden. Still, macho boys love their mothers and their kids, and these four

fellows tell us they can even satirise themselves. Their characters boast of taking the heat of the US police force but can't take the heat of jalapeño chilli pizza.

But, as Piri Thomas reminds us, "the voice is a musical instrument". Rarely more so than when Miguel Algarin recites his "wordsongs" while conducting the event with his stashed hand (what first sounded like "I mean Hell" turned out to be "I need help"). He does more sounds with his voice than most bands do with all their instruments – which is not in any way meant to diminish the power of the British group Sidestepper, who accompanied the Latino poets throughout the evening in a complex dialogue between voices and instruments.

Richard Blair now produces, writes for and synthesises the band from the wheelchair into which a footballing mistake has temporarily placed him. He works with the astonishing Micky Ball – with his throaty trumpet dialogues – and trusty old-timer Roberto Piza, who adds Colombian polish to the group's raw edges.

Thankfully, next year's event is already being planned.

JP 11/10/98

BOOKS

Dickens was then and this is now

BY JUSTIN CARTWRIGHT

A Man in Full
by Tom Wolfe
Cape £20

This is an immense book. It is almost 750 pages long, and embraces scores of characters. Its ambition is appropriately huge. I think it is Tom Wolfe's deliberate play for the title of America's Dickens. Certainly Dickens was never far from my thoughts as I read the whole thing in three days: as in Dickens there is the prospect of failure and shame, there is sentimentality, there is striving for redemption, there is a thin line between wealth and poverty, there is an unjust prison sentence, and – exquisitely drawn – the niceness of social pretension. There are even American Dickensian names, like Raymond Peepgass, Buck McNutter, Wismer Stroock and Tigner Shanks. Wolfe has studied the assonances and the absurdities of Dickens's nomenclature. But he introduces another element all of his own, the state of race relations in America. The blacks in this huge book range from the elegant and sophisticated Roger White, a lawyer, to Fareek "The Cannon" Fanon, a millionaire football player from the ghetto. It is a brave and original view of America's black elite and its ambivalence about white America.

But the central character is 60-year-old Charlie Croker, whose size and appetites and nuances of speech are described by Wolfe with enormous gusto. Nobody can rival Wolfe, a product of a more genteel South, in this keen recreation of language on the printed page. Croker, former football star for

Nobody can rival Wolfe,
a product of a more genteel South,
in this keen recreation of
language on the printed page

Georgia Tech, is a property developer in Atlanta who has developed one property too many, the immense Croker Concourse. He owes his bank half a billion dollars and they are closing in for the kill. In the meanwhile Charlie is shooting quail on his 29,000 acre plantation, Turpentine (called "Turmpine" in echo of slave parlance), and trying to impress a Jewish businessman, whose custom he needs desperately, with his wealth, the adoration of his servants, the southern authenticity of his meals, the opulence of his private Gulfstream and the beauty of his young wife, Serena, whom he has recently married in preference to his 50-some wife, Martha. Martha, too, is wonderfully drawn, with all the pain and anonymity her abandonment has caused her.

Croker's good 'ole boy act is failing to impress either his creditors or his wife, but it is one of Wolfe's achievements that he allows Croker a measure of self-knowledge which attracts our sympathy as he struggles in the tightening coils of the bank. The bank give Croker a "workout" which is described with almost sadistic pleasure. How Wolfe loves the flip side of all that American corporate blandness, the vicious implacability of the bottom line. The bank has designs on his plane and his plantation and its chief loan officer, Raymond Peepgass, a timid fellow,



Tom Wolfe: American realism and Dickensian melodrama don't in the end mix. But for all that, 'A Man in Full' is a brilliant, wildly enjoyable book

DEBORAH FEINGOLD

while hiding behind the corporate bully-boys, begins to harbour ambitions of his own. Perhaps he can salvage something from the wreckage of the Croker Global Corporation by some underhand dealing. He is himself involved in a paternity suit, which he is losing hands down. The description of this suit, mounted by a Finnish girl, is hilarious, an inversion of all the absurdities of court cases in Dickens.

At the same time, Roger White II, known as "Too White", receives a call from an old friend, the black mayor of Atlanta. One of the leading businessmen – white – of Atlanta, a close friend of Croker, claims that his daughter has been raped by Georgia's most famous black athlete, Fareek Fanon. The mayor wants White to bring Charlie Croker to the rescue. He has knowledge that Croker is in financial trouble: if Croker, ex-footballer himself, can speak up for Fanon, the mayor thinks that he may be able to avoid racial conflagration in Atlanta, and at the same

time promise Croker some respite. So we see another Dickensian moral dilemma set up. Should Croker lie to save his empire when the truth is he is something of a bigot who, on meeting him, finds that he hates the arrogant Fanon? The mayor, of course, is playing a double game.

While all this is going on, Tom Wolfe introduces a character out in California, who just happens to work in a frozen food warehouse for Croker Foods, a division of Charlie's conglomerate. The motive here is to show the grinding aspects of American capitalism and to demonstrate a familiarity with the argot and manners of the blue collar, who live in a world of machismo quite as fantastical as the world of the culture-hungry of Atlanta. Wolfe succeeds wonderfully. Conrad Hensley is a Victorian innocent who wants to do the right thing when he is laid off, as a direct result of Charlie's troubles. In a scene reminiscent of Sherman McCoy's wrong turn in *Bonfire*

of the Vanities, he finds himself in the wrong part of town and on the wrong side of the law. In the course of a day which starts innocently enough taking a typing test, he ends up in jail; at his trial he refuses to plead guilty and is sent to a hellish prison where homosexual rape is imminent. Now Wolfe is off again on the organisation and language of cons. Brilliant though it is, I began to feel that, like Charlie Croker, Wolfe had taken on one challenge too many; but of course prisons and unjust sentences are part of the canon.

Now there is an unmistakable sense that the novel is heading for the rocks; we know that all these characters and all these subplots must be tied up, but we have a fear that the task is impossible. Help comes from Epictetus. Hensley, who has ordered a thriller called *The Stoics' Game*, is given a book about the Stoics by mistake. He takes to it like a duck to water and his new Stoicism enables him to survive the horrors of prison. He escapes during an earthquake and

finds his way to Atlanta with the help of an Asian underground network. Wolfe is showing off; we just can't cope with this knowledge of the new Asian America at this stage. Eventually, as a private care worker, Hensley meets Charlie Croker, still wrestling with his problems, and he converts him to Stoicism, the better to face his enemies. This is all so unconvincing and thin that in the last few chapters the book is a grave disappointment. It is almost as if Wolfe simply could not control what he had created and decided to finish it off with this *deus ex machina*. Of course in Dickens improbable things happen, but that was then and this is now. Another way of looking at this relative failure, is that American realism and Dickensian melodrama don't in the end mix.

For all that, this is a brilliant book – vast, satirical, moving, often profound, and always wildly enjoyable. I couldn't put it down.

The bells of hell went ting-a-ling for everyone

BY MICHAEL BURLEIGH

The First World War
by John Keegan
Hutchinson £25

The Pity of War
by Niall Ferguson
Allen Lane £18.99

requiring the diversion of troops to support them, although no one reading this book will speak lightly of Italian cowardice. Soldier Svejk apart, these campaigns largely involved illiterate peasants. Where as the war in the West had a generous supply of warrior writers, including Barbusse, Jünger, Owen, Remarque and Sassoon, the war in the East had to await Solzhenitsyn's *August 1914* for literary justice.

Keegan does not neglect the war beyond Europe. In Africa, where Rhodesians such as Arthur "Bomber" Harris fought alongside Boer veterans to expel the Germans from Namibia; and China,

The US Marines' response
to calls to retreat
was the immortal
"Hell, we just got here"

where Sikhs and South Wales Borderers joined Japanese allies in liberating Tsingtao, home of the light Sino-German beer. In the end, this global dimension really counted. With Bolshevik Russia knocked out of the war, the Germans moved their last considerable forces westwards for one final heave. But their submarine destruction of American shipping, and foraging of trouble in Mexico, also led Woodrow Wilson to declare war. A German politician rashly predicted: "They will not even come." In the event, a nation with the world's 17th-largest army soon deployed more than a million men, with the prospect of millions more. These included US Marines, whose response to calls to retreat

was the immortal, "Hell, we just got here." The thought of these millions of fresh troops, arriving at the rate of a quarter of a million a month, sapped the German army's will to fight.

Niall Ferguson is unarguably this country's brightest younger historian, single-handedly responsible for revivifying the Lazarus of economic history. His latest book is brilliant, hard-headed and disturbing; a pyrotechnic amalgam of war finance, kill ratios, and the gruesome fate of prisoners. It is compulsive reading.

The opening scenario has some surprises. In 1914, anti-militarism was in the ascendant, while the nations most likely to fight were forming alliances. This did not happen in the case of Britain and Germany, because unlike France or Russia, Germany did not threaten the Empire. By 1914, a Germany with puny invisible resources and feeble domestic revenues had lost a naval arms race with Britain, while the armies of France and Russia loomed ever larger. Germany struck out from a sense of weakness: economic, financial and military. As Ferguson writes: "if Germany had been as militarist in practice as France and Russia, she would have had less reason to feel insecure and to gamble on a pre-emptive strike."

Britain felt no obligation to defend Belgium, as the Foreign Office eagerly indicated, while nothing in Germany's initial strategic aims directly threatened the British Empire. Hawks in the cabinet and on the Conservative opposition benches talked up Germany's rather modest initial objectives into plans for Napoleonic hegemony. Britain could have lived with the Kaiser's European Union, while the nations of eastern Europe might have fared better under informal German empire than they did under the totalitarian tyrannies which after a brief interval succeeded it. Much of educated England had to be dragged into war screaming, shocked to find themselves allied with barbaric Russia against the land of the PhD. The exceptions included that dreary interactive gaggle of back writers and spooks whose germanophobic scaremongering fuelled public paranoia by blurring fact and fiction.

Given the huge disparity in resources between the Entente and Central Powers, Ferguson wonders

why the latter were not quickly annihilated. The human disparity was 32 to 25 million soldiers: that of combined national income 60 per cent higher in the Entente's favour, not to speak of Britain's vast reserves of accumulated overseas capital. In reality, the Germans used their slender resources more efficiently, and killed or captured far higher proportions of men than they lost. The home front held up too, despite real privation, with far fewer strikes than those plaguing the British war effort.

Whereas many British units fell apart once officers were slain, the Germans developed stochastic tactics, with tight groups of killers, who did not need constant orders, roving around the battlefields to deadly effect. Nihilists such as Ernst Jünger came into their element. Why men endured this carnage is controversial. Loyalty to immediate pals, or a desire for revenge, sometimes joined what Sassoon described as "an insidious craving to be killed", a fatalistic death instinct. But most of all there was the optimistic calculation of individual chances, as in the Tommies' song: "The bells of hell go ting-a-ling / For you but not for me." Anti-war literature was often ambiguous. Sentimental notions of soldiers as frustrated pacifists wanting to perpetuate the football played during truces do not sit well with evidence Ferguson cites of Gordon Highlanders returning from such contacts, fingering their bayonets and muttering: "I don't trust those bastards."

Lack of goodwill was evident elsewhere, namely the high incidence of killing prisoners; passages detailing these are the most shocking in Ferguson's book. This was not simply provoked by *feint* surrenders, but by a desire for revenge, deliberate refusal to divert food or guards, or by orders to take no captives. It also proved difficult once "you start a man killing ... to turn him off again like an engine", a fact demonstrated over and over again in the bloodstained unsanitary climate of much of post-war Europe. For as both these fine books show, notably Ferguson's which ventures more deeply into post-war Europe, the First World War left much unfinished business, and men more than ready for conflicts made more vicious by related, if superficially inimical ideologies, in which utopia was menaced by class or race enemies.

The First World War began during one of the hottest summers on record. The Habsburg empire had lost Germany to Prussia, Italy to Piedmont and now faced the prospect of losing the Balkans to Serbia. It was back-to-the-wall time. A pro-terrorist Serb state secured Russian support; Habsburg intransigence towards Serbia was egged on by Berlin. Germany's military elite had their own agendas and anxieties, inclining them to strike then at both France and Russia, though their planning actively risked British involvement, and hence global escalation.

Unlike today, there were no arbitrary organisations, or headlines to dispel false perceptions. Moreover, diplomatic dithering upset precise military schedules, surrendering advantage with each elapsing hour. Hence, on 30 July 1914 Russia's Foreign Minister told the Chief of Staff: "Now you can smash your telephone," making it impossible to receive orders rescinding mobilisation. This sort of thinking took hold across the continent: fears of revived Napoleonic hegemony enabled Sir Edward Grey to Napoleonise the situation to war that was otherwise bouncable. A cabinet into war that was otherwise bouncable. A cabinet into war that was otherwise bouncable. A cabinet into war that was otherwise bouncable. "You see," said Lloyd George pointing at a map of Belgium during a crucial cabinet session, "it is only a little bit, and the Germans will pay for any damage they do."

During the ensuing four and a quarter years of conflict, around ten million men perished. An Indian soldier wrote: "This is not war, it is the ending of the world." The benign, civilised and cosmopolitan societies of the old world were shattered; an era of fascism and Bolshevism or Nazi totalitarianism ensued. A sense of loss – formally tarried off for this nation by *Lutyens's* architectural evocation of nothingness at the Cenotaph – endures nearly a century later. As it also does for young Australians who pilgrimage to the beachheads of Gallipoli to honour their grandfathers. Both of John Keegan and Niall Ferguson mention relatives who fought or died in the 1914-18 war, in accounts who radically different as a sepia Flanders battle scene in a regimental mess, juxtaposed against jagged Vorticist brutality. John Keegan, one of the

world's most distinguished military historians, is a writer of immense humanity and style. He describes every major or minor theatre, while conveying the minute it took to empty the magazine from an Enfield rifle, or the anaesthetising effect of the 20 million shells rained down on Verdun. He writes as sympathetically of Italians slaughtered in the 12 battles of the Isonzo, as of men who did not return to Kilnmoiton in Wiltshire.

Keegan finds saving virtues in even the stoniest generals, such as Italy's Cadorna, despite the fact that: "In no way – appearances, attitude, spoken pronouncement, written legacy – [did they] commend themselves to modern opinion." Fifty-six British generals were killed. But Haig taxes Keegan's generosity.

After initial mobile encounters, the war in the West settled along a 450-mile front, weaving from the Franco-Belgium coast to Switzerland. Beyond this belt of devastation, with its craters, defoliation and villages smashed into brick-coloured smudges, life went on much as normal. Large sections of the front were inactive, confining intense fighting to where advantage was possible. Here, the "fronts" loomed and moved like the weather systems to which they lent their name. Complex entrenchments, with links to minimise the field of fire of unwanted occupants, were separated by impenetrable swaths of barbed wire, first used on American cattle ranches in the 1870s. Chlorine and phosgene gas were used to try to break the stalemate, interspersed with lachrymatory bromide shells: troops had to choose between crying or choking. Artillery barrages were walked forward by observers in sporter balloons, although the risk of blasting one's own infantry to smithereens was considerable. Massed tanks appeared only later.

Keegan's books is a multi-service, international history of the war, rather than an account of static in the trenches. War in the East was fluid. Serbs and Russians ravaged the Austro-Hungarians, requiring enhanced German input, while the involvement of Turkey on the side of the Central Powers opened up new campaigns in the Caucasus and Mesopotamia. New allies, such as the Greeks, Italians and Romanians were a mixed blessing,



BY JULIAN RATHBONE

1066: The Year of the Three Battles
by Frank Mdynn
Cape £18.99

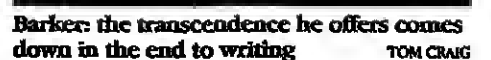
So, any book that helps us to understand better how it happened and what it meant is to be

he had to contain William on the Flamingo peninsula (as it then was) because once William broke out his supply problems would be over. East or

□ Julian Rathbone has been commissioned to write the screenplay of his bestseller 'The Last English King' (Abacus £6.99). His latest novel is 'Trajectories' (Gollancz £16.99).

For all the risks he took then, the logic of Barker's work suggests he may one day go further. The transcodeance his books offer to humanity, hidden in reality-cracks, fissures and comas-states, comes down, in the end, to writing. In *The*

'Galilee' is out this week (HarperCollins £17.99)



BY LAVINIA
GREENLAW

Visible Worlds
by Marilyn Bowering
Flamingo £10.99

Visible Worlds is fashionably

Visible Worlds is written with such panache and is so much fun to read that it seems churlish to resist its more fantastic moments. It is a wonderful piece of storytelling.

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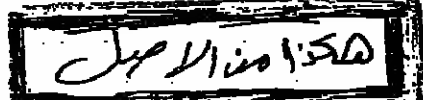
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You might as well swap the parents round

All books are avidly promoted by their publishers. But not many come with an endorsement as resonant as the note struck by the American psychologist Steven Pinker in his introduction to this gripping analysis of the reasons why children turn out the way they do. "Don't be misled by all the fun," he writes. "The *Nurture Assumption* is a work of serious, original science. I predict that it will come to be seen as a turning point in the history of psychology."

It is quite a prediction. For too long, she feels, we have persuaded ourselves (or allowed experts to persuade us) that the behaviour of children is controlled and conditioned by their parents. The entire Freudian tradition has supported a childcare industry with a vested interest in persuading parents that they are of paramount importance. Harris does not dispute their power: parents are absolute monarchs on the domestic scene and can, if they wish, ruin a child's life for ever. But she does, thoroughly and at length, dispute the extent of their influence. In the argument between nature and nurture, the latter has too hitherto been taken to mean "the home". But our real characters, she argues, are formed outside the home – by the group dynamics operating in schools, in playgrounds and in society as a whole. And groups move fast to accentuate differences. Kids who attach themselves to a naughty group soon grow naughtier; overweight children quickly get fatter; those who team up with the swots soon start doing "push-ups with their brains".

It's an enticing argument and the evidence in its favour is appealing. Children don't grow up talking like their parents (unless they go to the same kind of schools their parents went to); they learn

in pyjamas; but the boy went ape. "How did Luella Kellogg feel," Harris wonders, "when her 14-month-old son ran to her with an orange in his hands, grunting 'uhuh, uhuh, uhuh'?"

Good question. But is it an insight to point out that children imitate most eagerly children slightly older than themselves? The most surprising thing about Harris's claim is her insistence on its outrageous novelty. It does seem slap-the-desk obvious. But though it might startle a few Freudians, it won't raise many eyebrows among parents, who see every day the extent to which their children are moulded by their peers. Still, Harris has given this aspect of human development a fresh and powerful emphasis. In her analysis, children are not trained adults; they want merely to be successful children, and this involves distinguishing themselves from adults as vigorously as possible.

And while the book is tremendous testy fun, it does strike the odd shrill note. Harris is anxious to assert, and quick to mock. She makes a grandstand play out of the fact that she was once rejected by Harvard, and asks us to share her glee in having the last laugh. Similarly, she bases a whole chapter on the "little ladies" at her school who didn't want to befriend her, and sarcastically thanks them for

BY ROBERT WINDER

The Nurture Assumption
by Judith Rich Harris
Bloomsbury £18.99

propelling her on her path to glory ("If those 'little ladies' in the snooty suburb had accepted me, I probably would have turned out just like them.") These seem rather minor scores to be settling when you have just written a turning point in the history of psychology. Or perhaps they prove her point. It wasn't her parents that made who she is – it was her hinkered professors and snooty chums.

Moreover, for such an assiduous demolisher of other people's research (the appendix on Frank Sulloway's recent book about sibling rivalry puts his statistics through a very sharp shredder), she is surprisingly willing to base some grandiose arguments on sketchy or anecdotal evidence. She theorises about British men on the evidence of a single haronet's son who had a horrible time at boarding school. And she seems to accord undue but fashionable sanctity to the child-rearing habits of "traditional" societies, on the assumption that people who tie their children's foreheads to a piece of string

are by definition wiser or more natural than we are.

Is it pedantic to pick these nits? Quite possibly. *The Nurture Assumption* is written with a degree of passion and vehemence that is probably worth more, in the end, than a level head. There is plenty of time for sober reflection concerning both the general points she urges on us, and the specific details. Presumably some busy researcher such as herself will subject her analysis to the same kind of close scrutiny she has brought to bear on her rivals in the field. In the meantime, she has given us a memorable and refreshing blast of energetic thinking.

She wonders heretically whether the present fashion for "quality time" – parents actually engaging with their children – is really an advance, and broods on the need for schools to unify classrooms to prevent children from falling into the groups – racial, gender, class – waiting to engulf, define and limit them. She even suggests that as we strive to grow more egalitarian in some areas, the differences between us grow more exaggerated in others: they become more noticeable, more "salient", and children cling to them. The more enthusiastically Dad changes nappies and Mum drives trucks, the more zealously boys play football and girls jump rope.

Her style tends towards (and sometimes strains

towards) the epigrammatic; she loves to clinch arguments with a gag. She casts cheerful aspersions on Rousseau and his confidence in the innate virtuousness of children by alerting us to the fact that he deposited each of his own offspring at the door of a foundling home. "They may have been born good," she notes, "but they were not born lucky." As a result, her book is a lively anthology of neat sayings. For instance:

"A boy plays with the girl next door when there's no one else, but he nails a 'No Girls Allowed' sign on the clubhouse he builds with his male peers."

"Children would develop into the same sort of adults if we left their lives outside the home unchanged, and switched all the parents around."

"If teenagers wanted to be like adults they wouldn't be shoplifting nail polish from drugstores or hanging off overpasses to spray I LOVE YOU L12A on the arch."

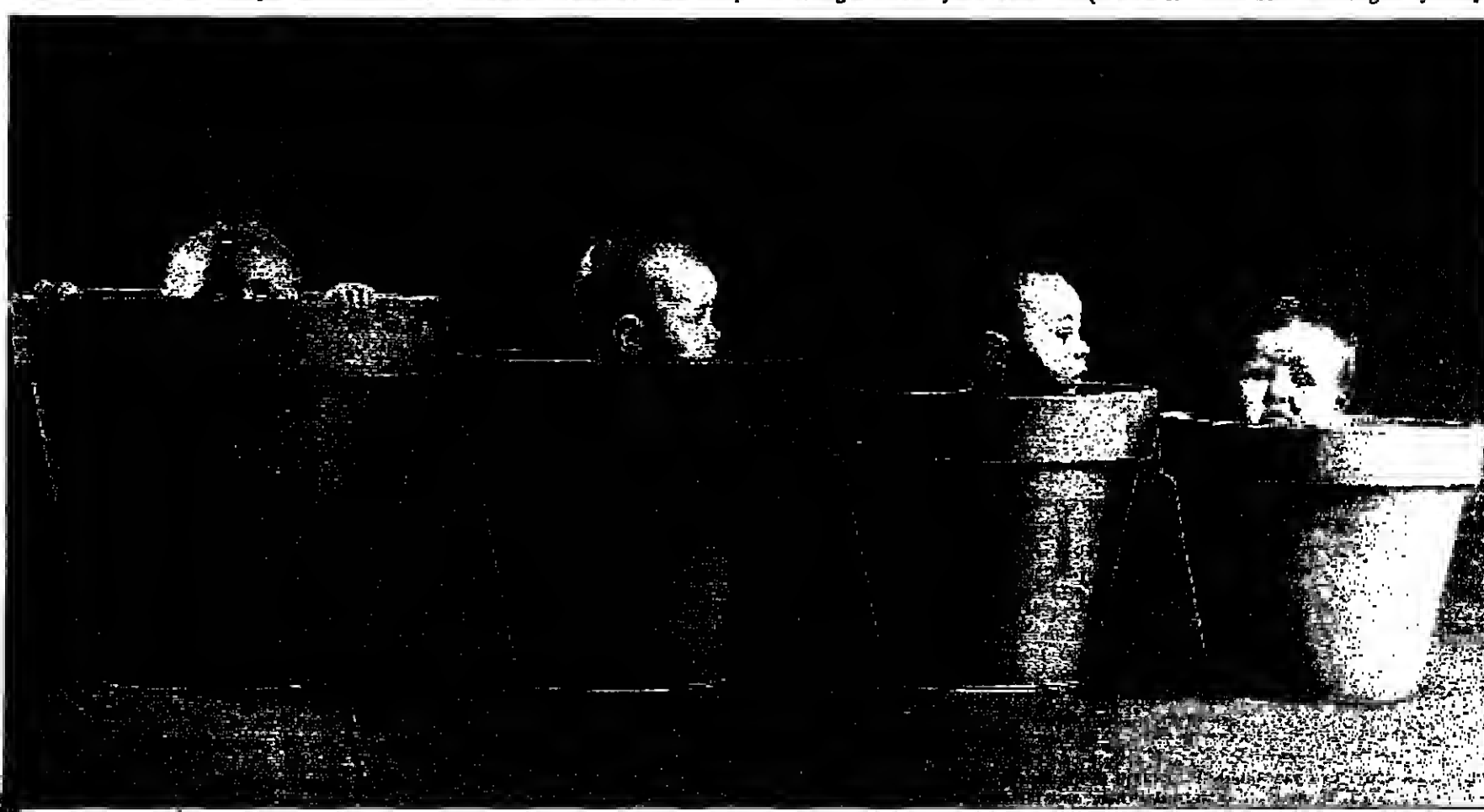
"We think it's cute when little boys pretend to shove. We don't think it's so cute when they light matches or chop down the cherry tree."

Harris gives parents little credit for steering or tolerating the groups that define their children; but for the most part her arguments are fizzy and liberating. They tuck you up, your Mum and Dad.

How did Luella Kellogg feel when her 14-month-old son ran to her with an orange in his hands, grunting 'uhuh, uhuh, uhuh'?

by imitating their peer group. Immigrant children quickly swap their mother tongue for the idioms and accents of native kids. Then there are the children who are picky eaters at home, but anything goes glutious everywhere else. When a young boy skins his knee at home he may well cry, but in front of his pals he is more likely to tough it out.

Harris even narrates a wonderful 1933 behavioural experiment in which a young chimpanzee was raised in the home of Winthrop and Luella Kellogg alongside their own baby boy, in the hope that the ape would acquire human characteristics. The plot thickened when the Kelloggs realised that the ape wasn't imitating the boy; the opposite was the case. They had overestimated the power of nurture: The chimp remained a chimp, though he looked cute



'Until Now' says a great deal about the trusting nature of some parents. They lend Anne Geddes their little pride and joys, and she dresses them up as cherubs, puts them in flowerpots (as in '4 Pots', right), fruitbaskets or chrysalises. She balances them on the hands and chests of models or on the stems of nutted plants; she fancies-dresses them as watermelons or peas in pods or sunflowers or doornice or cabbages. The range and inventiveness of Geddes' imagination is astonishing, as is her skill in managing to get so many babies to sleep in strange and wonderful places. 'Until Now' by Anne Geddes. Headline £29.99.

PAPERBACK ROUNDUP

Singling out the Couples by Stella Duffy. Sceptre £6.99. "I am only singling out the couples. Because I hate the couples."

The *f— couples*. The *f—* kissing, smiling, simpering, love you, love me, make our baby, we'll be a family couple." Stella Duffy has previously written quirky crime fiction featuring a lesbian private dick who has quickly turned into a cult figure. Here she turns her hand to Nineties-style romance with a story that does credit to her noir background. Princess Cushla is blessed at birth with all the virtues except one – the compassion fairy was held up on the tube and so could not bestow her gift. No one seems to notice that Cushla is utterly heartless, and hanging on to her throne, so Cushla bores up in London, on a mission to destroy happy couples. This is not the literary heroine we have come to expect from young, female writers; Cushla is manipulative, not falling apart, and men, poor creatures, are putty in her hands. Duffy is a pitiless observer of love's young dreamers, pinpointing the narcissism and self-delusion that keeps them in thrall. But Cushla doesn't get off

too easily, either. This brittle, funny, urban fairytale ends with a moral, delivered like a sly poke in a princess's eye.

Promises Lovers Make When it Gets Late by Darian Leader. Faber £7.99. More devastating news for couples who thought they were happy: the promises of undying love we make to each other in the first (and final) pangs of passion don't mean a damn. In his latest exercise in popular psychology, Darian Leader sets out to prove that these sincerely delivered promises reveal far more about our personal inadequacies than the love to which we lay claim. Leader draws largely on the work of Freud and Lacan, and there is no doubting his erudition, but he has the nous to make himself accessible to *Cosmo* readers. His references are to popular culture; Bruce Willis in *Die Hard* embodies the fantasies of a frustrated employee who couldn't think of a cutting rejoinder to his or her boss's bad-tempered rebuke (but not in that nasty, sweaty T-shirt, surely?). Equally, Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* does duty for all the theories he can pack in. Nevertheless, his light touch

ensures that the gamut of human desires and failings that are so quintessentially *de nos jours* should not be taken too seriously. What with a barrel-load of witty (but not too highfalutin') theorising on fidelity, God, sex and power, he certainly knows how to deliver an entertaining and self-indulgent read.

A Perfect Wife by Christina Odone. Phoenix £6.99. Over the course of her career, Christina Odone, deputy editor of the *New Statesman* and former editor of the *Catholic Herald*, has amassed a wealth of knowledge on journalism, politics and religion. But, besides this, she can write gracefully and humorously on any subject you care to mention, and can always be depended upon to offer an original point of view. However, although they are deployed to the full in her second novel, these are not the requisite skills of a novelist. The hypocrisy that is attendant with power is her subject, and she starts with (another) seemingly perfect couple. We already know there's no such thing, but Odone plots her story neatly to dissipate any lingering misconceptions. Nina and Michael are beautiful, talented, glamorous etc etc. Michael is ambitious. Nina is religious. The charismatic Reverend Alexander is the rock "in a landscape of deceit" to whom she is fatally drawn when Michael starts working late. The writing is elegant and the tone is knowing, but so much is spelt out that the reader is left no room in which to engage with the characters, or to care much about what befalls them.

The Conservative Party: From Peel to Major by Robert Blake. Arrow £10. This self-styled "definitive one-volume history of the Conservative Party" has been deemed "essential reading" by William Waldegrave, and he should know. Lord Blake has updated his 1970 commentary on the history of the party from 1830 to 1955 to include last year's disastrous election. Initially, his aim was to end with the demise of the illusion that Britain was a world power; it "vanished within two years of Churchill's departure".

But, Blake continues, "its consequences are still unfolding in every aspect of public life, not least in the Conservative party itself". And so he gives an authoritative overview of Macmillan, Heath and Thatcher. The whole amounts to a learned and thoughtful assessment of his party, whose downfall was brought about in the same way that the Reform Act of 1832 felled Wellington and Peel: "They [the Tory landed gentry] failed to see their own interest in terms of political success."

Berta la Larga by Cuca Canals; translated by Sonia Soto. Anchor £6.99. This is the first novel by Spanish scriptwriter Cuca "Jamon Jamon" Canals. It is the story of a girl born under a rainbow, which, as legend has it, should bestow her with special gifts. In Berta's case, it simply means that she is very, very tall. At 16, she measures six feet two inches, and is the tallest human being in her village. Poor Berta is depressed by her height and ignored by the boys: "no man wanted a woman so tall she could look over his shoulder". But then she falls in love with the postman, and soon discovers that her moods have an extraordinary effect on the weather. Passion and extreme weather conditions combine in a delightfully daffy, magic-realist fable.

Napoleon: A Biography by Frank McLynn. Pimlico £12.50. Napoleon Bonaparte is one of history's great men, and possibly the most famous that ever lived. Frank McLynn is Visiting Professor in the Department of Literature at Strathclyde University and a full-time writer. In his biography for the lay historian, McLynn incorporates the most recent scholarship to present a compelling portrait of the "little Corporal". He acknowledges the Great Man but deliberates on the flawed human being, he praises the existential Hero, but exposes the plaything of historical forces. His achievement is to construct a clear narrative, but his failure lies in regarding received opinions and trite analyses that he seems to lack the expertise to discount.

Lilian Piccchini

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The Sunday Review

SAVE UP TO £188

Curlz are for girlz in the era of Boyz 'R' Uz



ROBERT WINDER

It is almost fitting, in a perverse kind of way, that a week which has seen all sorts of announcements regarding the politics of men, women, work and the family should end with the news that the Fox Family Channel (a joint venture between Rupert Murdoch's News International and Sahan Entertainment) is proposing to establish separate TV stations for boys and girls. In a half-hearted bid to suggest that this is a step forward rather than a step back (or at least to emphasise that these are advertising categories rather than mere sex types), Fox has modestly respect the genders: there will be a "Boyz Channel" and a "Girlz Channel". Fox probably only half-intended the announcement to chime with the release in this country of *Antz*, the new insect blockbuster; so they probably didn't mean to imply that kids are bugs. But there is no hiding the fact that the bid to build niche markets out of children is, as Fox kids of the future might say, bad news.

This isn't simply a matter of being baffled by the idea of dividing an audience so neatly in two. The outcome of such a crude split is all too predictable. It is rather as if, in a grisly parody of the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the sinuous fox were whispering into the ears of happy innocents about the temptations of forbidden fruit, and creating at a stroke a whole new gender divide.

Clearly, the boys' channel will be full of action-packed combat-adventure; the girls' channel will be weeper, soapie, and more connected with "relationships". The commercial argument in favour of this quasi-stereotyping is glib. These, the salesmen will say, are the things boys and girls like anyway; we are simply making it more convenient for them. But before we know it, there'll be an online sales pitch called *Boyz 'R' Uz* and it will be stacked with all the high-octane amusements that liberal parents strive in vain to keep out of sight.

It isn't easy to be politically correct when it comes to children. As Judith Rich Harris argues in her impressive new book about character-formation [see review, page 13], there is little that parents can do to channel, as it were, their children's curiosity in approved directions. The young ones leave home alert for signs that what they have learnt so far is not merely a cranky whim of their own parents. And naturally, any attempt to tutor boys or girls in the idea that

they are more or less the same (or at any rate deserve to be treated alike) founders on the obvious fact (to four-year-old eyes) that the sexes are hugely and fundamentally not alike.

On the whole, the world supports them in this view. If they like dressing up, then they'll find that the available costumes for boys consist of soldiers and policemen, while girls get to be brides and nurses. If they want to practise shooting people, they'll find a zillion easy ways to painlessly try out homicide with toys or in computer games (in contrast, it is not that easy to buy a football in a toy shop these days). And as soon as they enter primary school they will run into an emphatic gender gap, underlined by the sharp division of school uniforms (boys get rakish caps and austere flannel shorts; girls are given pretty bonnets and drifty cotton dresses). Harris suggests that drawing attention to these differences serves only to exaggerate them; and even argues that the more parents insist on sex equality, the more likely children are to cling to existing boy-girl caricatures.

The science here is fuzzy. There aren't many answers, simply competing theories. Are naughty children treated cruelly because they are naughty; or naughty because they are treated cruelly? Nice and pretty children are treated nicely and prettily – but this doesn't mean that they will turn out either nice or pretty. The one thing we can be sure of is that it is a complicated business, and this is why the Fox initiative is so dismaying. It is too simple an answer to the vexed and urgent question of what children want or need.

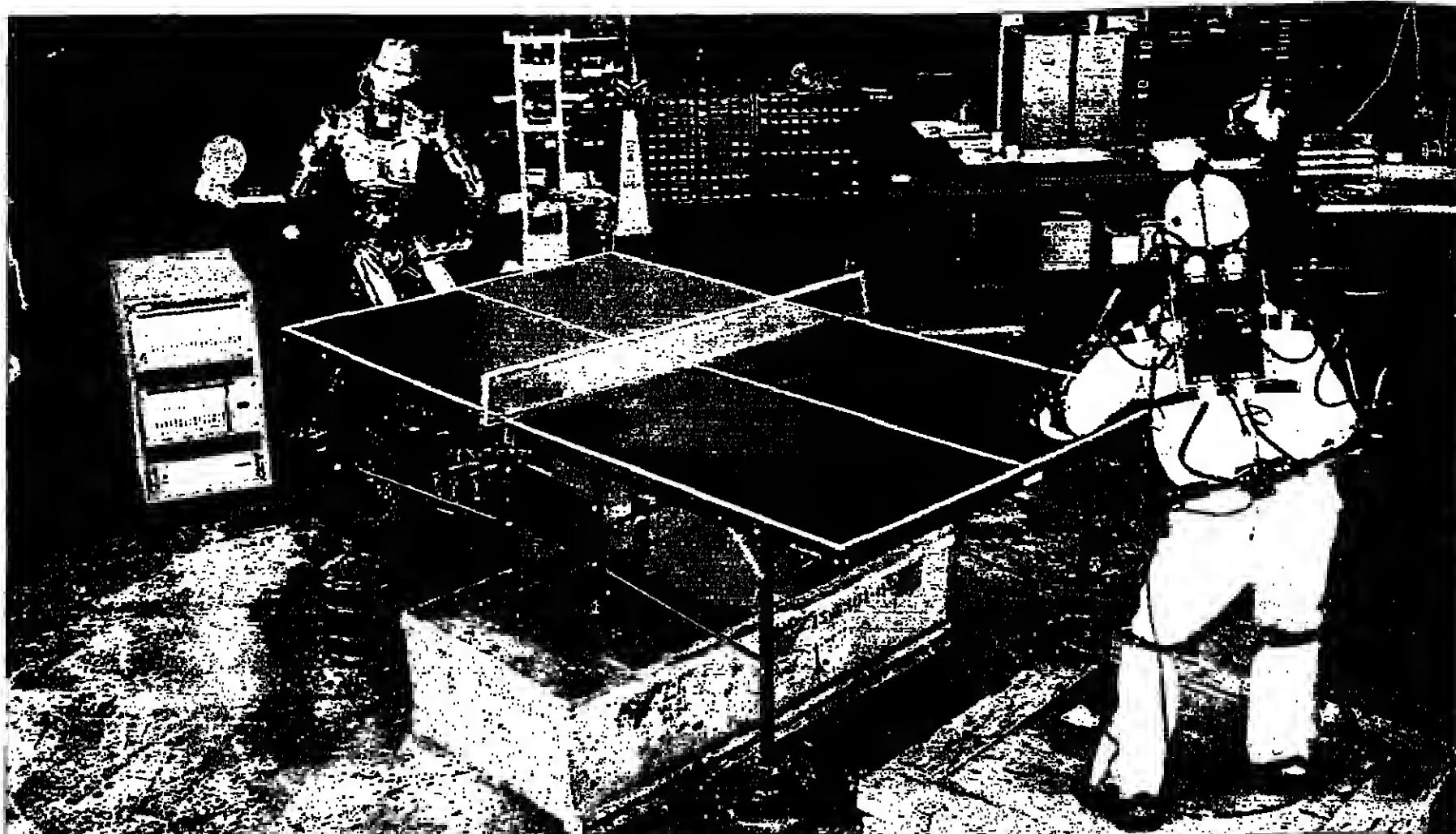
All of us want things that are had for us, whether it be drugs, cigarettes, or watching too much television. Children are no different. Whether we should encourage or even tolerate moves to indulge their laziness is another matter. Yet while politics fiddles and to a large extent prattles, the really influential initiatives are being taken in the private sector, and in popular culture. The creation of market niches encourages the creation of groups, and the creation of groups encourages animosity between those groups. The flipside of the sense of belonging is an acute disdain for those who do not belong. But while it might be true (and is bad enough) that boys will be boys, they don't, surely to God, have to be boyz.

HOBSON'S CHOICE

- Ranking of Sweden, which has 7 per cent of its population classified as being in poverty, in a list of the world's most equitable countries: 1
- Square kilometres of forest for each 1,000 of the world's inhabitants in 1970: 11.4
- Square kilometres of forest for each 1,000 of the world's inhabitants in 1998: 7.3
- Number of red colobus monkeys left on Zanzibar: 2,000
- Length of a red colobus monkey's feet relative to the length of its legs, enabling it routinely to jump 25 feet between treetops: 1:2
- Length of time in years that the President Yasser Arafat Airport in Gaza has been ready for business but, until the Wye River Memorandum, unauthorised to open: 1
- Chances that a crime in Britain will involve a car: 1 in 4
- Average number of call-outs per week by the RAC and AA last year to breakdowns caused by faulty engine immobilisers: 1,700
- Number of private investigators in the UK: 10,000
- Amount Kenneth Starr spent on a photocopier: \$56,810
- Number of US states in which oral sex between consenting, married, heterosexual adults is illegal: 15
- Number of girls under 16 in England and Wales who become pregnant every year: 9,000
- Number of McDonald's restaurants opening around the world a day: 6
- Number of sparklers needed to generate the heat of a blowtorch: 3
- Number of American college and high school students using Ritalin, the drug used to treat attention deficit hyperactive disorder: 2.5 million
- Hour at which a woman prescribed slimming pills, "Black Bombers" by her G.P. in the 1950s – a period of her life she described as "Oh, it was just go, go, go" – used to get her children out of bed to wash their sheets: 3 am

Compiled by Will Hobson

SOURCES: UN Human Development Report, National Geographic, The Asian Age, Daily Telegraph, Girl About Town, The Guardian, Red, Times Educational Supplement, International Herald Tribune, TES, Channel 4/Daily Telegraph, Department of Trade and Industry



The winner of the science category in the World Press Photo Competition is this depiction of robot ping-pong by the American photographer George Steinmetz. It joins the other category winners in an exhibition of prize-winning news images which opened at the Royal Festival Hall last week, and will be published in the 1998 Annual Year Book by Thames and Hudson (\$12.95). The award-winning photographs were selected by an international jury from more than 36,000 images, from 115 countries.

Alight here for station books

WH Smith barged into bookselling 150 years ago, and has since helped shape the modern novel. By Paul Barker

ESSAY

These days you can buy anything at a mainline railway station: knickers, liquor, skin magazines. But in the early days of rail, moral crusaders worried about "cheap French novels of the shadiest kind" being sold on station bookstalls among bottled beer and sweet tarts.

In 1848, that changed. Enter William Henry Smith II, stage right. One hundred and fifty years ago last week, a bookstall owner licensed by the London and North Western Railway – name of Gibbs – was thrown off Euston station. New men moved in. Thus was born the first WH Smith railway bookstall.

Smith always combined fierce business dealings with high-mindedness. No more naughty French novels, but also lots of profit. His father, William Henry Smith I, had already pioneered faster newspaper distribution, switching from horse-drawn coaches to rail. Smith wanted to make his name in his own right. His first ambition was to be a vicar. His father made him join the firm. Books gave him a chance to show that his mind was on higher things. He also realised what a delectable captive audience travellers were.

In the 1960s, *Private Eye* began calling the firm "WH Smug", after it refused to distribute the newly launched magazine. But William Henry junior had begun as the firm meant to go on. Smith's bookshop clean-up act got him the nickname, "North Western Missionary". Later, after he entered Parliament, *Punch* always called him "Old Morality".

Morality went hand in hand with commerce. The ousting of Mr Gibbs at Euston was the upshot of a sharp deal between Smith and Captain Mark Huish, the general manager of the LNWR. Huish's many enemies called him "a monopolistic ogre". Smith got in on the ground floor of a new trade. In 1840, Britain had only 1,331 miles of railway track. Thirty years later it was 15,310. The abolition of stamp duty in 1855 meant that Smith could put cheap newspapers on his stalls as well as books. Professor Jack Simmons, the railway historian, notes how they strengthened national uniformity. Once Smith expanded into running a subscription library at his station shops, his London-based power became even stronger. (He started up because the established subscription library, Mudie's, wanted too high a fee). Wilkie Collins called Smith and Mudie "the twin tyrants of literature".

Smith was the sound of the middle classes arriving at Platform One. Throughout the 19th century, the working man and his family

had a tough life. But the middle classes leapt ahead. Smith was a missionary (at the age of 21, he listed 17 items he should always remember in his prayers) but he was a middle-class missionary. When his bookshops were launched, and for many years afterwards, only first and second class passengers had glass in their windows. Third class sat in wind, rain and soot. Railway reading wasn't for them. Thomas Arnold, father of Matthew and headmaster of Rugby, welcomed the railways: "feudality is gone for ever." But classes were, if anything, reinforced.

Smith's influence on English literature was double-edged. On the one hand, he helped in a huge expansion of literacy. (Even the railway companies did their bit. All staff who dealt with the public had to be able to read and write). Smith's hundreds of bookshops literally spread the word. They were part of a broad social movement, which also took in Co-operative Society reading rooms and university extension lectures. Characteristically, when the 1870 Education Act established state schooling, Smith became a member of the first London School Board.

But there is an on-the-other hand. In a study of Victorian novelists, John Sutherland says that sales through WH Smith "meant golden

weeks. It tried to block George Meredith's novel, *Esther Waters*, about a woman seduced and abandoned. Following the usual rule for censored books, it became a best-seller.

Smith drew many moral lines. The sensationalist *Illustrated Police Gazette* sold 100,000 copies a week, but none of them through his shops. He was also a strict Sabbatarian and refused to supply Sunday papers. Result: these could press ahead on their own lines. For the most successful, like the *News of the World*, these were the same lines as the old *Gazette* – sex and crime. Popular culture rolled away from Smith, like spilled mercury.

He was an odd tycoon. In many ways, he was dullness personified. In newspaper distribution, what you want is absolute reliability. He delivered on this. The firm's Strand despatch room was one of the sights of London. Visitors could marvel at fifteen *Daily Telegraphs* being folded in a minute, in near-silence, and see special twine being tightened around the packages with a special slipknot.

Smith was one of the "geniuses of distribution" (in one historian's words) who rose during Victorian Britain as heavy industry began to wilt under American and German competition. Others were Jesse Boot and William Lever. Aply, Smith made handsome extra

'Private Eye' started calling the firm 'WH Smug' in the 1960s, after it refused to distribute the newly launched magazine

profits through a contract to cover station walls with posters for patent medicines and soap powders. But in the world of books, Smith "became a synonym for stuffy puritanism, dreary bourgeois respectability, and hypocrisy". On hypocrisy, consider Smith's election to Parliament. He bought his Westminster seat – and defeated the libertarian philosopher, JS Mill – with a scandalous lubrication of money. He escaped public censure, and kept his seat, only because of his fine "character".

He was a novelty in a Parliament dominated by aristocrats and their hangers-on. He brought the news that money talked. When he rose to be First Lord of the Admiralty, Queen Victoria worried about the reaction of high-born naval officers to "a man of the Middle Class". He was parodied by WS Gilbert in *The* at public gatherings and in the bedroom. This is why London Zoo and Marks & Spencer both now have "poets in residence." Ted Hughes wanted to spread the poetic word. Whoever succeeds him as Poet Laureate must carry on this task, becoming not so much a court poet, celebrating the narrow world of the Windsors, as an ambassador for poetry in the real world.

– Express

TONY BLAIR was urged yesterday to carry out a radical overhaul of the way the Poet Laureate is appointed. MPs said the "old-fashioned" selection process should be opened up to wider consultation so that the Queen's Poet became more of a People's Poet. Mr Blair has yet to turn his mind to the appointment of the new Poet Laureate, let alone consider the armchair procedures involved in it. He has little time these days to read books, and poetry may never have been high in his interests. When he was asked last year for his favourite poem about peace, Mr Blair instead came up with a folk song called "The

Green Fields of France". Poets and publishers came up with at least a dozen names (of potential laureates). Some felt that someone as controversial as Tony Harrison would raise the profile of poetry; Carol Anne Duffy would be able to write wonderful poems to order; Douglas Dunn would excel for being a witty writer and feeling things strongly. Others suggested heavyweights such as Andrew Motion, partly because he would be the public figure for literature, or Seamus Heaney.

– Times

THE NEXT rank of candidates (after Seamus Heaney) suggested by weight of work or reputation – James Fenton, Geoffrey Hill, Tony Harrison, Craig Raine – all raise the difficulty of being unblatant when the job depends on the doing of bidding. Will the next laureate carry a pager on which Alastair Campbell flashes approved metaphors and meters? If so, Fenton, though otherwise supremely eligible, is not the man. The perfect title for a collection of his work would be *Off Message*. (Tony Harrison's range of subjects – m-

Pirates of Penzance as Sir Joseph Porter. "Stick to your desks and never go to sea. And you all may be rulers of the Queen's Navy."

Gilbert added a jibe about Sir Joseph's "asters and his cousins and his aunts". WH Smith was run by family, for family, with the help of the occasional family friend. As the century ended, the firm faced harder times. Railway profits dwindled to vanishing point. The companies wanted more money from the bookshop contracts. WH Smith was forced off most stations, and withdrew into the High Street. (It reappeared between the wars, after the falling railway companies merged into four big cartels). William Henry's son, Freddie, wasn't up to all this. He brought in a rowing chum, CH St John Hornby.

And so it went on. When David Smith retired as chairman in 1975, he was the fifth successive Smith to head the firm. Until 1992, the chairman was Sir Simon Hornby, grandson of CH. Only in the last few years have all the in-laws and cousins left the board. WH Smith's influence is still immense. The bookshop in London's Victoria station claims it sells more magazines than any other shop in Europe. As a distributor, WH Smith is now all-powerful in Britain, having bought its Scottish rival, John Menzies, earlier this year. When WH Smith started to distribute *Private Eye*, in the early 1980s, the *Eye's* sale doubled. But old habits die hard. The *Eye's* issue of 5 September 1997, with a sarcastic cover about the popular frenzy after Princess Diana's death, was withdrawn from sale in London shops for a while. Minds then changed. But even temporary censorship had the usual effect. Sales of the issue soared.

The firm has been flailing around recently – buying Waterstone's for example, then selling it again. I doubt if anyone goes to WH Smith deliberately: you use the shop if you happen to be near it. The Classic FM jingle still says: "Whatever you're into, get into WH Smith". But the current, non-family chairman has announced that the firm will "restructure" as a "popular specialist". We'll see. I went into their prime-site, newly restructured shop at King's Cross station. It seemed much as before, with Kit-Kats, paperback and skin magazines. Loaded. *Maxim* and *Arena* showed lots of breast. In one corner, "Erotica" shelves offered something straight (*Pleasure's Daughter*), something sado-masochistic (*The Schooling of Stella*) and something gay (*Conquistador*). I began to sympathise with old William Henry's missionary position.

employment, the fatuity of the Gulf War – may be regarded as rather Old Labour. There is no poet who fits Blairism as naturally as Hughes and Larkin fitted Thatcherism.

– Guardian

A (SCOTTISH) version of the laureate? Why not. The heirs of the Scottish Renaissance are still with us. And there is a younger generation which has brought a fresh eye to the Scottish scene. Their Scottishness ranges, as Edwin Morgan puts it, "from the rabid to the near-invisible". They live in the real world. If you wanted a poet to put us properly in our place, who better than Liz Lochhead? She has already given us her version of Scotland in *My Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*. "Ah dinna ken whit like your Scotland is Here's mines. National flower: the thistle. National pastime: nostalgia. National weather: smirr, baar, drizzle, snow. National bird: the crow, the corbie, le corbeau, mol!"

– Magnus Linklater, *Scotsman*

Compiled by Sophie Harrison

JP 11/10/150

WORDS
BY NICHOLAS
BAGNALL

ADULT

"Ministers also want to support 'adult relationships' by introducing more flexible wedding ceremonies," I read in the *Independent's* excellent report on the government's green paper. I took it that the quotes round "adult relationships" were not the *Independent's* Social Affairs Editor's own - that they weren't the sort that have a tacit "as it were" after them - but that these were the green paper's words. Jack Straw used them himself at last week's press conference. But what did they mean exactly?

There's no problem with the etymology. *Adult* comes from the past participle of the Latin *adolescere*, when we were children, an adult was simply a grown-up, and the stage at which we ourselves became adults more or less coincided with the point at which we stopped calling them grown-ups and started to call them adults ourselves.

Not that we immediately began to behave like adults, or that we were sure how they were supposed to behave anyway, since we had for some time realised that "adult" did not, after all, mean "wise".

Yet I'm pretty certain that this is what the government means when it talks of "adult relationships". It was not, if I've read the *Independent's* report correctly, thinking here about the inadvisability of teenage marriages. In short, it was reverting to the child's-eye view of grown-ups as sensible people.

This understanding of *adult* as meaning "mature", in the moral sense, is quite recent in the history of the word, which came into the language during the explosive increase in our vocabulary in the 16th century and stayed pretty well the same for nearly 400 years. Certainly an *adult* was always someone whose physical and mental powers were developed.

But it wasn't until our own century that we began to make the mistake of supposing that those who had reached adulthood had, by definition, put away childish things.

I remember my own childish view of the word being falsely coloured by another word very like it: *adultery* was something adults did. I was not to know that it came from a different word altogether.

But *adult* has its seedy overtones too, so in a way I wasn't so far wrong. For the use of *adult* as meaning "dirty" we might perhaps blame the film censors with their old "A" classification, though most "A" films were innocent enough.

The word often still has nudge-wink quotation marks round it when used in the "dirty" sense, and it was partly this that made those quotes suggestive. Obviously no such thoughts would have entered the minds of the compilers of last week's green paper, with its earnest talk of parenting skills. By this it means not, as in the older meaning of the verb *to parent*, ways of begetting children, but ways of looking after them once they've been begotten. There's nothing wrong with *parenting*, so why don't we like it? Is it because of its conjunction with *skills*? I wish I knew.



A slippery hold on the past

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY
FREE FILM SCREENING

Last year, the veteran Japanese director Shohei Imamura made his first film since *Black Rain* (which won a prize at Cannes in 1989 with the story of the effects of the atomic bomb on a Hiroshima family). His new film *The Eel*, joint winner of the Palme d'Or at the 1997 Cannes Festival, is a very different work. Yamashita, a 45-year-old man (played by Koji Yakusho), has just been released from jail after serving eight years for killing his unfaithful wife. His only companion in prison had been an eel in a tank. Now on parole, he sets up as a barber in a small town outside Tokyo, but he finds it hard to break with his past. One day, he saves a young woman (Misa Shimada, above with Yakusho) from suicide and is eventually persuaded to hire her as his assistant. He is at first reluctant to do so because she reminds him of his dead wife, but with her help the business prospers. Eventually, however, Yamashita will have to decide whether he wants to come back to life, or to bury himself, like an eel, in the mud. Imamura began his career as an assistant to the great Japanese director Yasujiro Ozu, and later with Yoshiharo Nomura and Yuzo Kawaizumi.

He directed his first feature, *Stolen Carnal Desire*, in 1958, but during the 1960s gave up fiction in favour of documentary. In 1983, he had another success at Cannes, winning the Palme d'Or for *The Ballad of Nanako*, a touching study of old age. *The Eel*, a major film from a director who belongs to the great tradition of Japanese film-making, opens at selected cinemas on 20 November. But we have 175 pairs of tickets on offer for a preview screening on Sunday 15 November at 11am at the Renou, WC1. Sead an SAE to 'Eel FFS', Arts Desk, *Independent on Sunday*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5DL.

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RECOMMENDED

ART

Burne-Jones. Large, almost convincing retrospective of the gloomy and sensual Pre-Raphaelite. Birmingham Gas Hall (0121 309 1966), to 17 Jan. Sun 12.30-5, Mon-Thurs 10-5, Fri 10.30-5.

Pieter de Booch. Full account of the 17th-century minor master. Dulwich Picture Gallery, SE21 (0181 693 8000). LAST WEEK (ends Sun 15 Nov). Sat & Sun 11-5, Tues-Fri 10-5.

Picasso. Painter and Sculptor in Clay. A dazzling selection of the master's ceramics. Royal Academy, W1 (0171 300 8000), to 16 Dec. Sun-Thurs 8 Sat 10-6, Fri 10-6.30.

Grinling Gibbons. All you need to know about the great baroque wood-carver. V&A, SW7 (0171 938 8348), to 24 Jan. Sun, Tues-Sat 10-5.45, Mon 12-5.

John Singer Sargent. Posh people, slithering brush-strokes; but lots of these portraits are rather good. Tate, SW7 (0171 887 8000), to 17 Jan. Daily 10-5.30. TIM HILTON

BOOKS

A Man in Full by Tom Wolfe (Cape, £20). A brilliant book - vast, satiric, moving, often profound. See review, page 11. JUSTIN CARTWRIGHT

Birds of America by Lorrie Moore (Faber, £9.99). Stories that face the disappointments of life head-on. An unflinching eye for the casualness of tragedy. TIM HAIGH

The City of War by Niall Ferguson (Allen Lane, £18.99). Analysis of the First World War. See review, page 11. MICHAEL BURLING

George Eliot - The Last Victorian by Kathryn Hughes (Fourth Estate, £20). Restores to us the sexy, witty and funny Eliot, and provides a redefinition of the art as well as the life. MARK BOSTRIDGE

The Nurture Assumption by Judith Rich Harris (Bloomsbury, £18.99). A psychologist disputes the extent of parental influence. See review, page 13. ROBERT WINNER

CINEMA

Buffalo '66 (15). Welcome to Vincent Gallo's world: the writer-director-star likes cosy warm-heartedness and cool perversion, he likes Dennis Potter and John Cassavetes, and he likes the indecently over-exposed cleavage of his co-star Christina Ricci. One of the year's most entralling and memorable films. Metro (0171 734 1506) 1.00 3.30 6.00 8.30. (P)

The Dream Life of Angels (18). Erick Zovca's loosely-woven character piece stars a perfectly-cast Elodie Bouchez and Natacha Regnier as two young women caught in the poverty trap in Lille. Zovca's understanding of the grammar of such friendships is sure: his film rings with a bright note of truth. Cezar Solo (0171 734 2255) 1.00 3.30 6.00 8.45.

East Side Story (15). Dana Ranga and Andrew Horn's history of socialist musicals is essential viewing. A gripping piece of cinematic archaeology, it allows you to be intoxicated by the ebullient optimism of tractor drivers and coal-pit operators and moved by the quiet tragedy of the ageing singer who boasts: "They used to call me the Elvis of the East." ABC Swiss Centre (0870 902 0403) 1.40 6.20.

My Name Is Joe (15). See review, page 5. ABC Total Cx Rd (0870 902 0414) 1.15 4.00 6.40 9.20; Gate (0171 727 4043) 1.15 3.45 6.15 8.50; Ritzy (0171 733 2229) 1.15 3.45 6.15 8.50; ScreenGreen (0171 226 3520) 3.30 6.30 8.50; Virgin's Fulham (0870 907 0711) 12.30 2.45 6.00 8.30; Haymarket (0870 907 0712) 12.55 3.30 6.10 8.40.

The Truman Show (PG). Jim Carrey is at the centre of the panopticon in Peter Weir's engrossing morality tale about TV and the tyranny of everyday life. Weir sidesteps his own questions in the closing moments, but you can go home and argue them out for yourselves. Empire (0990 889990) 1.00 3.30 6.00 8.40; Odeon's Camden (0181 315 4229) 3.30 6.05 8.50; Kensington (0181 315 4214) 1.55 4.30 7.05 9.40; Marble Arch (0181 315 4218) 4.15 6.45 9.15; Swiss Cottage (0181 315 4220) 1.10 3.45 6.15 8.50; Virgin's Fulham Rd (0870 907 0711) 1.10 4.20 7.00.

9.40, Trocadero (0870 907 0716) 12.00 2.15 4.30 6.50 8.20; Whiteleys (0990 889990) 1.00 3.20 6.10 8.50. MATTHEW SWEET

COMEDY

Al Murray: Late Lock-In. Turf-robbled of the Perrier award, perhaps because his awesomely funny, fearlessly realised Pub Landlord character wouldn't touch mineral water if there was a drop of lager left on the planet. Improv, W1 (0171 387 2414). Sat.

CDs

Beck: Mutations (Geffen). No samples, no hip-hop beats, and the new Dylan is still well ahead of the pack.

REM: Up (Warner). Overflowing with ideas after nearly two decades - REM at their most interesting and beautiful.

Cardigans: Gran Turismo (Stockholm). Song after delectable song of perfect bittersweet pop, all topped with the voice of a sulky goddess. Lauryn Hill: The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill (Columbia). The Fugees' chanteuse kills all our doubts softly with her songs. A hip-hop-soul-reggae-gospel masterpiece. NB

Brad Mehldau (Warner). An album that's difficult to overpraise from the young US pianist: sensitive ballad covers, reworkings of Nick Drake and Radiohead and five originals. Sublime.

Jan Garbarek: Rites (ECM). Norwegian saxophonist's long-awaited new album: a delightfully mixed bag of goodies. PHIL JOHNSON

DANCE

Mauro. The Royal Ballet makes its first ever visit to Belfast with Kenneth MacMillan's stunning three-act. Belfast Grand Opera House (01232 665577), Fri to 17 Nov.

Richard Alston Dance Co. Alston triple bill, including new work *Walzes in Disorder*. Cambridge Arts (01223 503333), Fri & Sat.

A Christmas Carol. Northern Ballet Theatre revives its popular all-singing, all-dancing Dickens number. Cardiff New Theatre (01222 878889), Tues-Sat. JENNY GILBERT

THEATRE

Real Classy Affair. Gangster-influenced idiom, pub philosophising and smart performances by Joseph Fiennes and Nick Moran make Nick Grosso's oorth Lodonoo comedy of manners a stylish, bravura piece. Royal Court, WC2 (0171 565 5000). LAST WEEK (ends Sat). Mon-Sat 7.45, M-Sat 4.00.

Richard III. Elijah Moshinsky's stirring main-house production, happily unburdened by concepts and clearly audible, has a comically mischievous Robert Lindsay as Richard. Stratford RST (01789 295623). LAST WEEK (ends Sat): then touring. Mon-Sat 7.30, M: Tues & Sat 1.30.

Phedre. Jonathan Kent directs 100 minutes of remorseless French tragedy, with Diana Rigg as the stepmother and Toby Stephens as the dashing son in the late Ted Hughes's excellent version of Racine. Albery, WC2 (0171 369 1730), to 28 Nov. Mon & Sat 7.30.

The Weir. Conor McPherson's anecdotal play, set in a small bar in the west of Ireland, has some of the best ensemble acting in London, with Jim Norton and Brendan Coyle outstanding. Royal Court, WC2 (0171 565 5000), to 23 Jan. Mon-Sat 7.30, M: Wed & Sat 3.30.

Three Sisters. See review, page 6. Birmingham Rep (0121 236 4453), to 21 Nov. Mon-Sat 7.30, M: Thurs & Sat 2.30. ROBERT BUTLER

VIDEO

I Went Down (15). Paddy Breathnach's odd-couple Irish road movie is a droll, unpredictable comedy, with terrific lead performances from Peter McDonald and Brendan Gleeson and a cliché-dodging script by the award-winning writer of *The Weir*, Conor McPherson. DENNIS LIM

OPENING THIS WEEK

ART

Slow Burn (Warwick Arts Ctr, 01203 524524, Tues to 12 Dec). Seven new abstract painters. Thinking Aloud (Cambridge Kentles' Yard, 01203 352124, to 3 Jan). Churchill, Disney, Gilbert and George... what's going on? TH

CINEMA

Blade (18; nationwide from Fri). Wesley Snipes stars as the comic-strip vampire. Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18; nationwide from Fri). Terry Gilliam's Hunter S Thompson adaptation, with Johnny Depp. Fire (15; in London from Fri). The first entry in Deepa Mehta's elemental trilogy. Henry Fool (18; nationwide from Fri). Hal Hartley's latest, starring Parker Posey. Hope Floats (PG; nationwide from Fri). Forrest Whitaker directs Sandra Bullock. Insomnia (15; nationwide from Fri). Norwegian thriller starring Stellan Skarsgård. The Knowledge of Healing (U; London from Fri). Documentary on Tibetan medicine. Left Luggage (PG; London from Fri). Isabella Rossellini in 1970s Antwerp. The Odd Couple II (15; nationwide from Fri). Matthew and Lemmon resurrected. MS

CONCERTS

Stravinsky Stageworks (Barbican, EC2, 0171 638 8891, tonight 1.00, new series. Tonight: *Pennsylvanian* and *Olympus* Rts. Henze Festival (Manchester RNCM, 0161 907 5278, Tues-Sat). Students and the BBC Philharmonic salute Germany's leading composer. Belfast Festival (01232 665577, Thurs to 29 Nov). Eliot Gardiner, Jan Bezdridge, and two much Philip Glass. MICHAEL WHITE

DANCE

Cruel Garden (Sadler's Wells, EC1, 0171 843 8000, Tues-Sat). Revival of Rambert's landmark Lorca-inspired dance-theatre piece. British Library Project (British Library, NW1, Wed to Sun 15 Nov). Fifty-four dancers take on the new building's vast spaces. Trisha Brown Company (Belfast Waterfront, 01232 665577, Fri). Rare chance to see the world-class New York company. JG

JAZZ

Orie London Jazz Festival (0171 416 5974, to Sun 15 Nov). Highlights: Paolo Conte (Rambert Scott's, W1, Mon-Sat), Italy's Tom Waits. Dave Brubeck (RPH Foyer, SE1, Tues), Geri Allen Trio/Nikki Yeoh (QEH, Tues), peerless pianist: John McLaughlin (RPH, Wed), world-class guitarist: Diana Krall Trio/Fred Hersch (Barbican, EC2, Thurs). PJ

OPERA

King Arthur (Barbican, EC2, 0171 638 8891, Tues). Paul McCreesh conducts Purcell. Boris Godunov (Coliseum, WC2, 0171 632 6300, Wed to 11 Dec). Mussorgsky's epic with John Tomlinson. Unmissable. Wozzeck (RPH, SE1, 0171 960 4242, Sat). Alban Berg's seminal shocker. MW

ROCK

Blondie (Wolverhampton Civic Hall, 01902 312030, Mon; Newcastle: City Hall, 0191 261 2606, Tues; Manchester: Apollo, 0161 242 2560, Thurs; Sheffield: City Hall, 0114 273 5295, Fri; and touring). Once more into the breach. NB

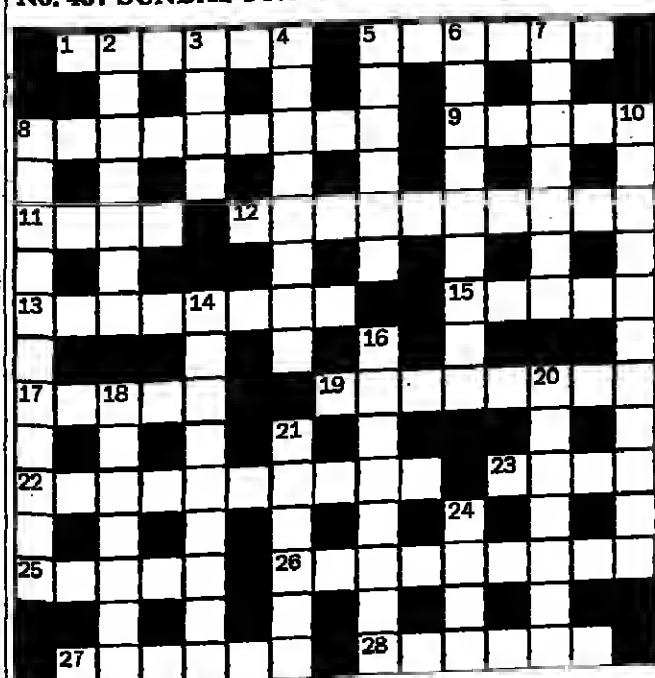
THEATRE

Shang-o-Lang (Bush, W12, 0181 743 3388, Wed to 12 Dec). Three birthdays are celebrated at Budlins in Catherine Johnson's new play. Macbeth (Riverside, W6, 0181 237 1111, Tues-Sat). Outhouse Productions' Shakespeare. The Storm (Almida, N1, 0171 359 4494, Thurs to 19 Dec). New version of Ostrovsky's 19th-century drama. CHLOE WALKER

NOTE: while every effort has been made to find the details of all listings, readers are advised always to check venues before setting out.

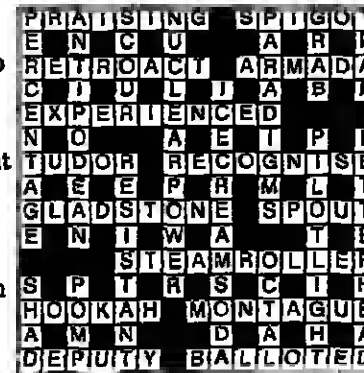
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

No. 457 SUNDAY 8 November By QUIXOTE



- ACROSS**
- Making a fuss with dirt somehow sticking in estimate of financial reliability (6,6)
 - Monk's fare - very small container of food (9)
 - Terms of reference when e.g. clock is put back (5)
 - A group of detectives dealt with LSD (4)
 - Ranting on the street - blue composer (10)
 - What one gets with doddle of a job half crumbling? (8)
 - A king and boy united in crime (5)
 - Question in restaurant (5)
 - Aspect of culture almost coming in short spells (4,4)
 - Periodic table may be (10)
 - Officer, not one renting foreign place (4)
 - A newspaper probing wickedness in minister's home (8)
 - Fool to mock when saint enters (8)
 - Unmask connoisseur not right, so twisted inside (6)
- DOWN**
- Works left by author my be dissected in seminar (7)
 - Force body necessarily has to absorb (4)
 - One animal about to become uncommunicative (8)
 - National organisation brought in tangible money from property (6)
 - Stop period of study at home at start of evening (8)
 - Just retribution from Eastern fellows upset over little girl (7)
 - Busy as an artist and choosing things at random (7,4)
 - Have a go undoing cruel knots holding bow of yacht (3,4,4)
 - After minor illness we will have sat around showing nervous reaction (4,5)
 - A newspaper probing wickedness in minister's home (8)
 - In church gets to nose, escaping round (7)
 - I mind after game becomes disastrous (7)
 - Present one removed from Christmas tree? (6)
 - Two person's keen inside (4)

LAST SUNDAY'S SOLUTION



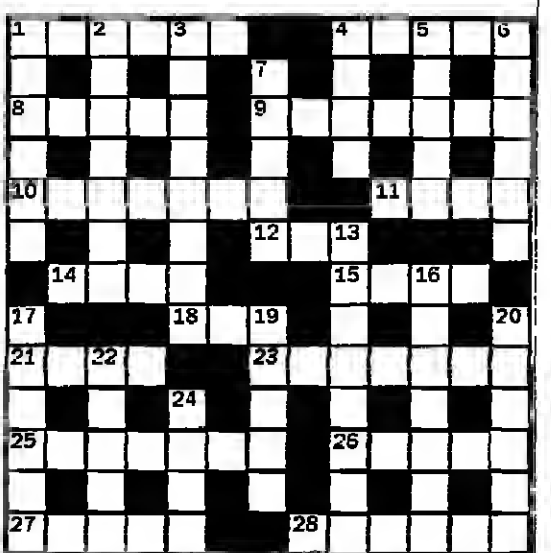
THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS PRIZE CRYPTIC PUZZLE

The first correct entry to Quixote's cryptic puzzle (left) drawn from the sack on Thursday will win a shelf of books from The Oxford University Press comprising: The Concise Oxford Dictionary; The Oxford Thesaurus; Concise Dictionary of Quotations; Dictionary of Modern Slang; Dictionary of English Place-Names and The Concise Dictionary of First Names. Five runners up will win a copy of the Concise Oxford Dictionary.

CONCISE

- ACROSS**
- Large edible gourd (6)
 - Yodurville show
 - ?
 - Ancient region of Asia Minor (7)
 - Staff (4)
 - Type of faster (3)
 - One who inherits (4)
 - Indian improvised music (4)
 - Tree (3)
 - Nibble (4)
 - Sudden urge (7)
 - ?
 - Rapidity (5)
 - Soviet labour camp (5)
 - Musician (6)
- DOWN**
- Optical illusion (6)
 - Spin (7)
 - See title (8)
 - Portent (4)
 - Swoon (5)
 - System of government (6)
 - Semiprecious mineral (5)
 - ?
 - Balcony in a theatre (7)
 - Pounce (6)
 - Excavator (5)
 - ?
 - To carp (5)
 - A hitch (4)

O is for 3D



The entries marked "???" have something in common suggested by the title

LAST SUNDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Recap, 3 Negated, 8 Concept, 9 Aroma, 11 Image, 11 Octagon, 13 Dome, 15 Trivet, 17 Delmas, 20 Ide, 22 Asstance, 24 Regal, 26 Prime, 27 Opinion, 28 Augment, 29 Ridge. DOWN: 1 Receipt, 2 Conga, 3 Precede, 4 Nition, 5 Grant, 6 Thought, 7 Drain, 12 Cede, 14 Otie, 16 Inking, 18 Earlier, 19 Silence, 21 Deport, 22 Alpha, 23 Niece, 25 Grind.

CAPTAIN MOONLIGHT



By Charles Nevin

A HOY! I've been noticing lately, as I'm sure you have, that it has become fashionable to mock our Government's bold attempts to "rebrand" Britain. Well, sorry, but I for one welcome the Millennium Products Initiative, which aims to promote British creativity by listing and promoting those British products which should soon be sweeping the world if they are not already. And yet, as I studied the latest list, released last week, I couldn't help thinking that we were in danger of selling ourselves short. For while the Captain would be among the first to applaud the clockwork radio, non-polish shoes, non-iron clothes, and the Lancashire BSP Converter, a unique pipe fitting which enables a plumber to change (or convert) from a standard (BSP) thread to

a piece of tube sealed with an O-ring, I still find myself worrying that the British genius for inventing things you didn't even know you needed is being seriously under-represented. Where, for example, is the Park-a-Plug plug holder ("Fed up with untidy plugs? Sink, basin and bath plugs can be a real nuisance, hanging around, cluttering up the place and generally getting in the way. Park-a-Plug is the answer!")? Where is the Pot Noodle, invented here in 1977? Or the Corby electric trouser press (1970), a reassuring presence in many a hotel room? Exactly. And there's much more. Look, for example, at my picture. That is a Tissue Tower. Free standing, with up to five lavatory paper rolls and is an attractive and practical solution to an unsightly problem. Only £10.99, from Home Free mail order. Or, for two or more, £9.99. This is the sort of product that should not go unheralded. So I am compiling my own list: send your entries to the Moonlight Millennium Really Quite Fascinating Products Initiative. Rewards are promised. Next!

■ AND, NOW, Captain Moonlight's Justly Acclaimed Media Corner. And this week, I should like to concentrate on Editors. Splendid people. The new man here is very good, you know. A Yorkshireman, from Sheffield. Right. Anyway, moving on: Richard Stott, forthright former editor of the *Daily Mirror* and *Today*. Well, for some reason, he doesn't want anyone to know that he's masterminding, on behalf of Mr Murdoch, a new free newspaper for the London underground. It's going to be called *The Tube*. I know all this because Duane, my correspondent specialising in the world of the smaller sized newspapers, their readers and role models, a most reliable fellow, told me. He also made a lot of jokes about "down the tube, eh, Captain," and "Mind the Gap" and "underground press" which I won't bother you with because I'm shooting nymphet. Quite literally. Because I don't know about the management style where you work, but at the *Daily Telegraph*, the editor there, Charles Moore, keeps a pair of shotguns under the sofa in his office. He does. It's only a few floors above us here, in Canary Wharf, so I'm listening out for that low "crump-crump" sort of sound fol-

lowed by a scream which will indicate that "Smoking Barrels", as he's known, is either unhappy with the layout on page three or has just bagged a brace through the window. Next!

■ BLACKPOOL. The Labour Party Conference. Listen, typically isn't everything, you know. The Captain also has a duty to History. Which is why I must tell you about Peter Stothard, editor of the *Times*, and the mystery of his disappearing hearty breakfast. Each night in Blackpool, before retiring, he left out his room service order for the full whack, black pudding, fried bread, and so on, and each morning he was given muesli and grapefruit or something similarly foreign and unfilling. Yes, some merry jester was altering his order. Step forward and deny it. Andrew Marr, playful former editor of *The Independent*, rooming just down the corridor. Sorry? Message from the Editor: that's enough Eds. Ed.

■ NOW, THEN. You will be wanting to know the Captain's Tip for Post Laureate. You will know that Mr Tony Blair is taking this People's Post thing very seriously indeed. Forget any of the posh names you may have heard, your Motions and your Fentions. In any event, I happen to know that old Motion charges at least £250 a reading, and the laureate only gets £97 a year, so he's right out. No, we have to look elsewhere. I must say I was very disappointed to learn that Sir Cliff doesn't write his lyrics. But Sir Paul, with such evocative, numinous works as his "Mary Had A Little Lamb", is being plugged by Mo Mowlam. (Thank you, Mo: wasn't "Give Ireland Back to the Irish" one of his, too, by the way?) There is, though, another stand-out contender, a rhymester with unmatched popular credentials, author of such lines as "So I am free/There's no boundaries for me/I am the freest of the free/This is my philosophy". Yes, that's right: Reggie Kray! He's got nothing to spend it on, anyway. Unconvinced? Try his epitaph for Ronnie: "Ron had great humour, a vicious temper/Was kind and generous/He did it all his way/But above all he was a man/That's how I will always remember/My twin brother Ron." Terrific. But wait, who is this, running late, on the rails? It's Des Lynam! He's releasing a CD of poetry for Christmas, including one of his own, "The Silly Isles", about the Falklands conflict: "But when those excoets are fired/When men are dead and others tired/Those sad grey rocks won't half have/Cost a lot." Sorry, Reggie. It is now.

■ MONARCHIST NEWS. And I must say this old officer's heart leapt when I heard that of all those Warhols being flogged off by Lord Archer (you must know him, little chap, writes) the ones snapped up first were the four portraits of the Queen. Well done, Ma'am! Quite makes up for the disappointment last weekend when Prince Michael failed to finish the London to Brighton veteran car rally. Broke down at Burgess Hill, apparently. My mother-in-law, by the way, who is Norwegian, tells me that HH Princess Ragnhild of Norway, Mrs



DEDICATION: Peter Mandelson gets an awful lot of press, but not very much of it concentrates on his willingness to set a hands-on example and lead from the front, does it? Here the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry is pictured working on the Hampstead stretch of the

Government's millennium bug eradication programme. No? Well, I had the same sort of idea for Sir John Birt and his digital TV programme. No? Then what about the Prince of Wales, always a dreamer, confusing a ski lift with a cable car? All right, all right, it's a German repair man.

Erling Lorentzen, is 60th in line to the British throne, which is reassuring. And thank you, Mr Stallybrass of Bognor Regis, for letting me know that your cousin Oliver also has a Norwegian mother-in-law. Fascinating. Next!

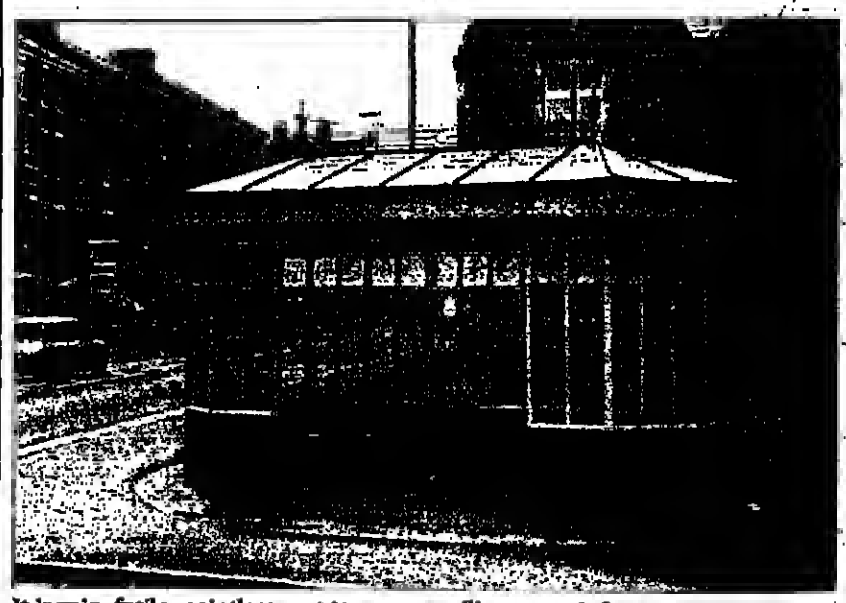
■ BERRNNGG! It is the telephone, and, on it, my parliamentary correspondent, Ms Una Tributable. My pen is poised, ready for the latest intelligence from the heart of government. "Captain! I have been talking with one of the excellent police officers who patrol the corridors of power here. And he told me that there is currently something of a crisis in taxi provision!" Indeed, I murmur. "Yes! It seems that the London cabbie is ignoring the light that tells him MPs are desirous of transport. This is for two reasons. The first is that most of the lazy articles only want to go a couple of hundred yards to the Norman Shaw building or such. And the second is that their level of tipping, always legendary, has hit a record rock bottom!" I replace the receiver, mulling over this fresh insight into the Third Way.

■ BERRNNGG! It is the telephone, again. And, on it, again, is Duane, my link with the lower orders. "Captain! This week's *TV Times*! The write-up on the National Television Awards! There's this story about how Gillian Taylor fixed the zip on her sister's dress on the way to the awards!" I ask Duane why this should be thought interesting. "You must remember Gillian Taylor, Captain! But it's the caption with the accompanying picture of the sisters that does it. It reads: 'Kim Taylor's just glad her sister Gillian is handy with a zip'. Handy with a zip, Captain!" I replace the receiver, none the wiser, to be perfectly honest. Did you know, by the way, what they used to call Anne Sloman, the BBC's chief political advisor on editorial policy, the one who banned any mention of Peter Mandelson's private life, during her brief spell in television current affairs? The Abominable Sloman. Always a popular figure, then. Next!

■ NATURE NOTES with Captain Moonlight. Nature notes has been unavoidably held over this week. This means that you will have to wait until next week to find out about what happens when witches spit on blackberries; the serial cat killer terrorising London; and how to cure small, nervous dogs who "wee" on the floor when visitors come to call. Sorry!

■ AND NOW, the Moonlight Miscellany, my "wry take" on current events and happenings. And first off, you'll be wanting to know about the picture. It was sent to me by Mr McLean of Dover in the wake of last week's hard-hitting column, which featured a photograph of a bus shelter similar to the one claimed to be the least used bus shelter in Britain. Mr McLean writes: "Your photograph of a bus shelter was not that impressive, I must say. Instead, how about the least used tram shelter? This photograph is of a wonderful example on the outskirts of Dover (on the old Folkestone road) just after it had been renovated in 1994.

Whilst it looks very pretty, the last tram left in 1937. Clang! Clang! David McLean. Thank you, Mr McLean! No doubt you, and many other readers, will also be delighted to learn that I have now found again the photo of the least used bus shelter, which I will show you next week. If you like. Next. Improve Your Quality of Life With These Handy Hints From The Captain. 1) To prevent trousers slipping off coat hangers, tie a rubber band around middle of cross-bar. 2) Insomniacs will be helped by eating a lettuce sandwich before retiring. And, finally, a gross slur has been perpetrated on one of my esteemed fellow columnists. Writing in the *Spectator*, a magazine, Joan Collins, an actress, writers on about being thrown out of some restaurant or other, proclaiming that the restaurateur knows he will get more publicity for throwing out "Joan Collins" than he would for "Joan Smith". The cheek! Time for a Moonlight You The Jury. Who would you rather be flung out with? That Joan or our Joan? Vote now on 0171 293 2462. Bye!



It is vain, futile, pointless, not to say unavailing, to wait for a tram here



Tissue Tower: converts to a useful vase



If you tell your girlfriend, will she think less of you?

SOMETIMES IT'S EASIER TO TALK TO SOMEONE YOU DON'T LIKE.

When you have a problem, it's the most natural thing in the world to want to talk it through with someone. Sometimes, though, this creates another problem: who's the best person to confide in? An obvious choice would be a close friend. But let's face it, we don't always choose our friends for their amazing powers of tact, diplomacy and discretion. Tell one person, and you may end up telling the world. You may be lucky enough to be able to talk to someone in your family. Then again, you may be one of the large number of people who find talking to your nearest and dearest agonisingly embarrassing. A girlfriend or boyfriend? If you can, great. But sometimes we don't want to expose our weaknesses to those who fancy us. And sometimes your relationship is

the very problem you want to discuss. That's where The Samaritans can be useful. We're more discreet than your best mate, we'll listen as carefully as your girlfriend or boyfriend, and we're as sympathetic as your family. We're also non-judgemental, unshockable, and extremely experienced. Our national number is 0345 90 90 90, and you can e-mail us on jo@samaritans.org or visit our homepage at www.samaritans.org. We're available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. And you don't have to be climbing up the walls before you call us - any kind of problem, big or small, is a good enough reason to pick up the phone. Call now. You'll find we're remarkably easy to talk to.

The Samaritans

THE DREAM FACTORY

In pursuit of safe sets



ANDREW GUMBEL

The veteran cinematographer Haskell Wexler remembers working on a movie a few years ago that involved a complicated scene with rain makers, helicopters, stuntmen and more. The first assistant director dutifully read out a list of safety rules to the technical crew: be careful climbing on and off the camera car, don't slip in the rain, be careful of the propellers on the helicopter. All very proper and correct, except that the crew had been working for 15 hours and could barely keep their eyes open. "You had these 40 guys in a stupor, handling electric and shifting heavy equipment around," Wexler recalled. "If the producers were really interested in safety they would have sent us all home to bed. They didn't have those rules read out of respect for human beings, but out of fear of lawsuits."

Working crazy hours has become the norm in the film industry, with technical crews in particular suffering from the studios' determination to cram shooting schedules into the tightest possible timeframe. As this column described last week, the death of an assistant cameraman who fell asleep at the wheel after a 19-hour day has led to an industry-wide cry for more reasonable working conditions - a cry that has so far elicited no more than a token response. Talking to Haskell Wexler, Hollywood's most outspoken voice on labour issues, the picture that emerges is of an industry that has lost touch with its own artistic integrity and become obsessed with one sole objective: maximising profit. "You've got guys out there whose health is suffering, whose marriages are busting up, who never get to see their kids. If you're working 18 or 19 hours a day you don't have a life, but what you are told

social worker will agree because if they say no they won't be hired again." The steady erosion of working conditions in the film industry has gone hand in hand with the takeover of studios by large multinational corporations which, according to Wexler, "don't know shit from shizola" about making films and concern themselves exclusively with the bottom line. "In the Forties, studios were run by people who made films that they wanted to make and felt passionate about. A lot of great movies were made on eight hours a day. Now, instead of Jack Warner running the show you've got Time Warner. There's no personality there. The bottom line doesn't have a face, just an abstract accountant-computer-business-quarterly-statement face that doesn't care about human beings. This is a phenomenon that is pervading our whole culture."

Wexler is currently collecting stories for a movie about abusive working conditions in the industry. Like the driver in Tennessee who was driving his cargo of high explosives at 60 mph even though there was a large sign on his dashboard saying he was to go no faster than 15 mph. "If I don't go at least 50 there's no way I can make the schedule they've given me," the driver said. Wexler sees the issue as being about far more than worker safety or perks like free motel rooms. "It's a conflict between human values and greed," he says. But safety, at least, is a campaigning issue that can get the lawyers interested, and lawyers are just about the only way to make an impression on the studio bosses. "There's no point trying to touch their conscience," he concludes. "because they don't have one."

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